

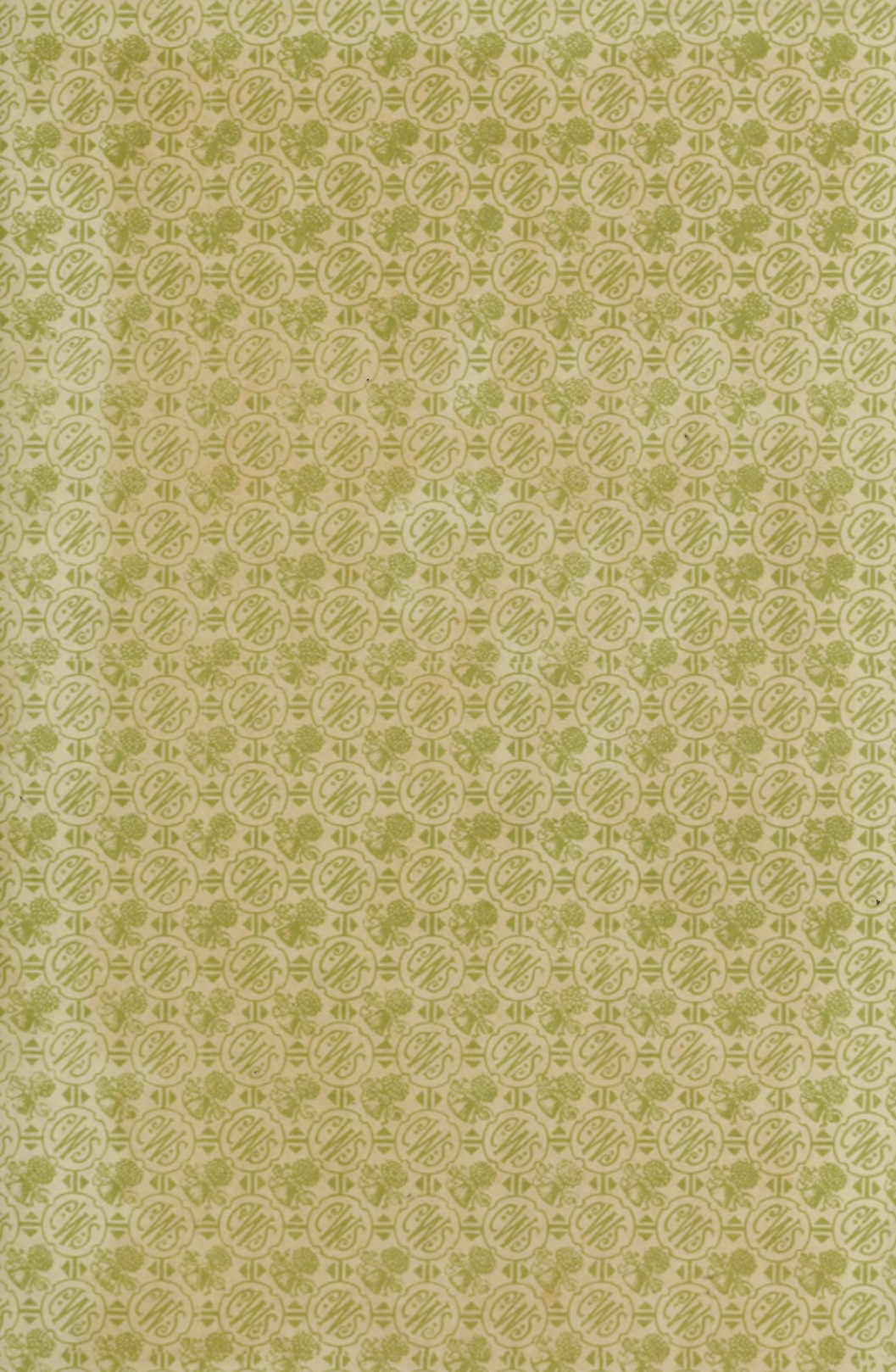
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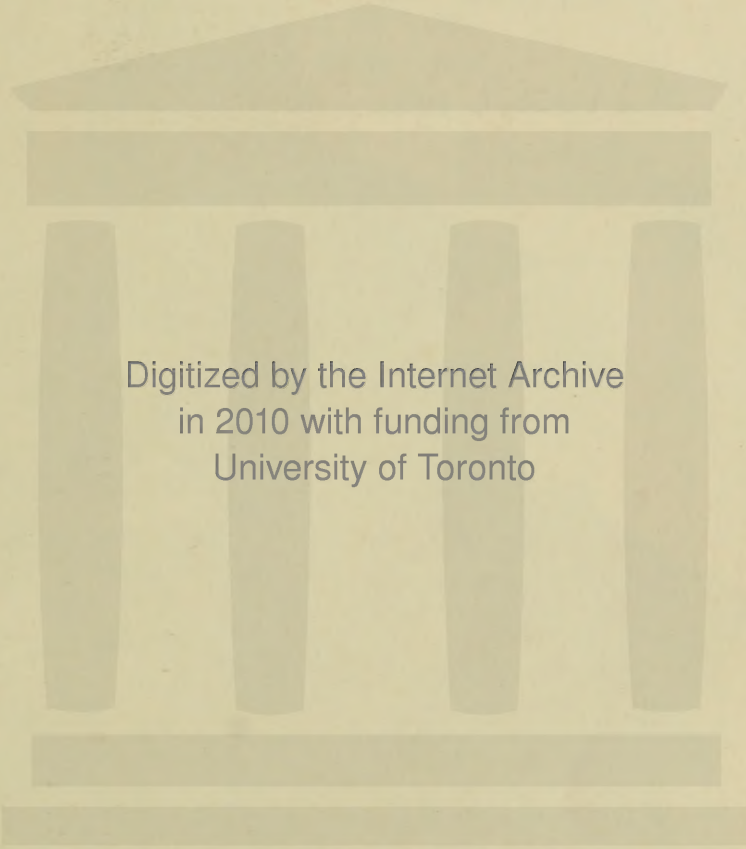
JUBILEE SOUVENIR

1863 C I & P S 1913

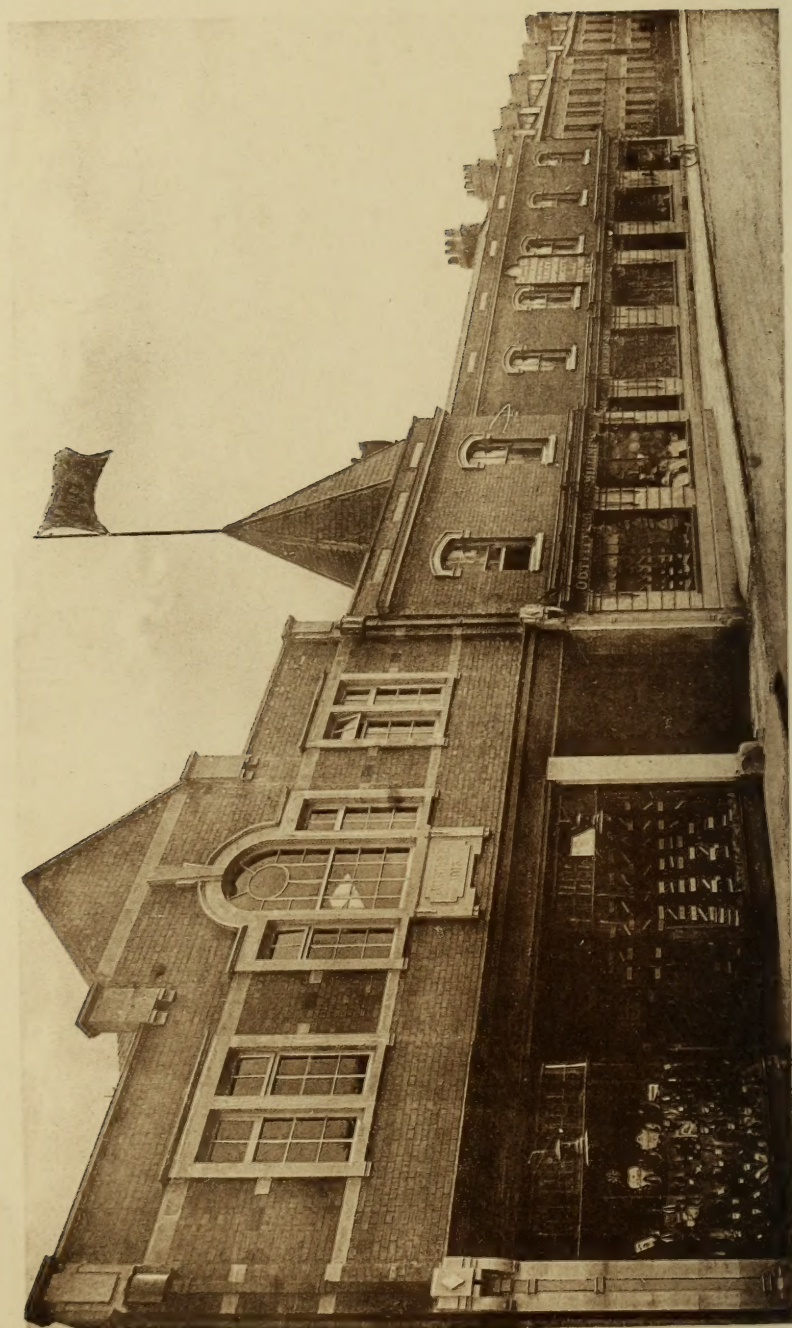
CAINSCROSS AND EBLEY
CO-OPERATIVE INDUSTRIAL
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THE CENTRAL PREMISES, CAINSCROSS, 1913.

1863.



1913.

Cainscross and Ebley
Co-operative Society, Ltd.
Jubilee **Souvenir.**



" The smallest effort is not lost;
Each wavelet on the ocean tossed
Aids in the ebb tide or the flow;
Each raindrop makes some floweret blow,
Each struggle lessens human woe."

HISTORY

— OF —

CO-OPERATION IN CAINSCROSS AND DISTRICT.

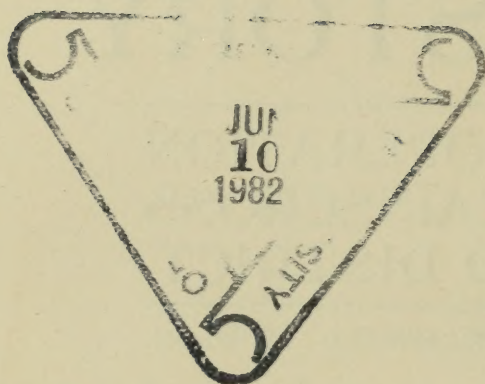
BY BRAMWELL HUDSON.



A Souvenir

IN COMMEMORATION OF THE JUBILEE
OF THE CAINSCROSS & EBLEY
CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY.

—
1863-1913.



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"Let each man find his own in all men's good,
And all men work in noble brotherhood."

PREFACE.

THE object in writing a History of the Society is to celebrate its Jubilee. In this record of events the intention has been to deal with facts connected with the Society, in the order in which they have occurred. The material at my disposal relating to the early period was of a very meagre description. In the fire at the end of 1867 the minute book and papers were destroyed, which left what should have been an interesting period almost blank. True, many of the early balance sheets have been obtainable, and from these it has been possible to glean some information.

In later years the records were more complete, and the author hopes that his reader will find herein something instructive that will conduce to a better understanding of the work and objects of Co-operation in this neighbourhood.

Acknowledgments and thanks are due to Mr. E. J. Hallett (of Selsley) for some of the Historical Notes, and among the authorities consulted was Blout's "History of Dursley." I must also express my indebtedness to the "Encyclopædia Britannica" Company for their permission to use the illustration showing the entrance to Frocester Court, and to the Cotswold Publishing Company for a like permission to use the illustrations showing Berkeley Castle, Owlpen Manor House, Avening Church, and the Steep (Wotton-under-Edge).

B. HUDSON.

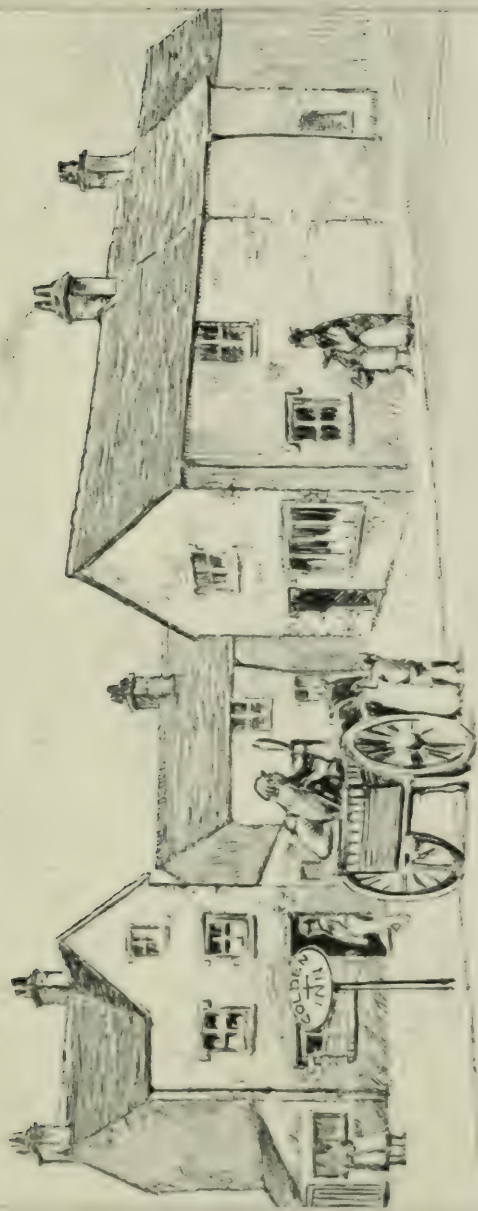
Cainscross, 1913.

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THE CENTRAL PREMISES AS THEY APPEARED IN 1863.



CHAPTER I.

The Historic Past.

“ Each one performs his life work, and then leaves it;
Those who come after him will estimate
His influence on the age in which he lived.”

“ The achievements of those who are gone, these are the inheritance of the people. The only true riches of the nation—men and women—these are the people themselves. The people have but to *will* it, and we set our faces towards a civilisation.”—*L. G. Chiozza Money, M.P.*

EARLY HISTORY—PIT DWELLINGS—THE ROMAN OCCUPATION—
THE DANES—MERCIAN KINGS—VILLAGE LIFE—PEACEFUL
INDUSTRY—DUTCH INFLUENCE—CAINSCROSS—DUDBRIDGE—
DURSLEY DISTRICT—THE HOUSE OF BERKELEY—CHURCH
HISTORY — OWLPEN — NIBLEY — WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE —
PURPOSE OF HISTORY.

EARLY HISTORY.

HISTORY is usually concerned with wars, conquests, and a record of the achievements of kings and princes. The genuine history of a nation, however, is the story of its people, of those who live amid the realities of everyday life, and by their labours in peaceful industry contribute to make a country what it is.

Gloucestershire is one of the most favoured counties in England. In scenery few can compare with it. There are the Cotswolds with their headlands and capes, and the view from these away across the Severn Vale forms a picture that is probably unsurpassed in England. The

county has played a great part in English history, for there are traces that it has ever been to the forefront in the life of the nation. In the camps on the hills of the neighbourhood there are marks of the many invaders who came to these shores, apart from the traditions which have been left to stimulate further study, and make us prouder of our lovely hills and vales.

But we can even link up with a more remote age. Far away in the palæolithic period this district was the home of the woolly rhinoceros and the mammoth, whose remains have been found in the gravel pits at Cainscross and at Gannicox, and of the reindeer, of which traces were found at Stanley Downton; but the earliest evidence of human habitation is to be found in the tumuli at Uley Bury and Nympsfield. Uley tumulus (opened in 1821) yielding some thirty skulls, and that at Nympsfield (opened in 1862) some sixteen others, all of dolichocephalic type, and accompanied by bones of oxen, hogs, dogs and birds, some rude pottery and flint flakes.

PIT DWELLINGS.

The pit dwellings of Rodborough and Selsley Hills probably occupy the site of an even earlier occupation. In the case of the pit dwellings at Selsley, it is suggested that the terraces on the western slope of the hill, now known as the Banky Lots, are the lands cultivated by the late pit-dwellers, at a time when the whole valley was marshy and impassable—the home of the wolf, and the bear, and the wild boar. In other parts of England such terraces, cut out of the steep sides of hills and made cultivable, commonly adjoin pit dwellings.

Evidence of Druid worship too is found at Selsley Hill, where the great mound is named the “Toots,” from Tentates, the Chaldean name for the god “Mercury,” the worship of whom the Druids brought from their Eastern home. Not only the mound, but also the way leading to it is still discernible.

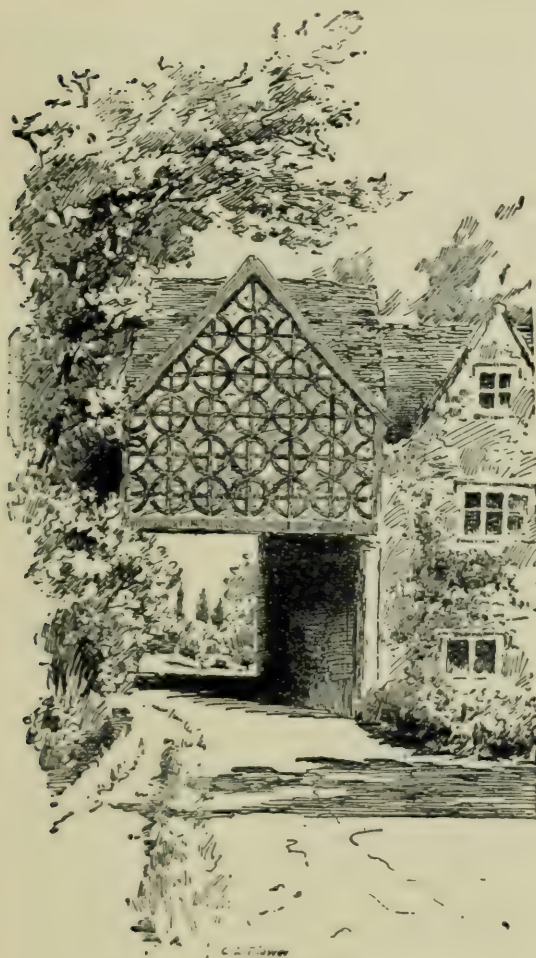
Of the early Britons we have traces in such familiar words as “Severn,” “Avon,” “Cam.” Like animals in their instincts and habits, with no thought but for

the gratification of the needs of the moment, perpetually engaged in strife, they settled here and there in the valleys, the beauty of which appealed to the Romans, who eventually occupied it.

When Autus Plantius established his great camp at Uley, Selsley Hill (formerly a British camp) was transformed into a dependent Roman camp, and to this period is to be traced the construction of the great road from Uley through Selsley and Cainscross towards Painswick.

THE ROMAN OCCUPATION.

Uley Bury has been described as the "Aldershot" of the Roman occupation. Under the Romans Britain became a corn-producing country, it constituted a western granary for the empire. Industry was fostered, beautiful residences were



ENTRANCE TO FROCESTER COURT.

built, with elaborate decorations. A fine example of a tessellated floor still exists at Woodchester, which, according to Lysons, is superior to any found in England. The pavement forms part of a ground plot of a very

important Roman villa. It is conjectured to have been the residence of a Roman chief, and occasionally even of the emperor himself.

The building, not only of camps and cities, but roads, was diligently carried on, of which in this county we have the Fosseway, Ermyn Street, and others.

After the Romans came the Saxons, who established many settlements in these valleys, at Hampton, Stonehouse, Eastington, King Stanley, and other places. At the last-named place it is still easy to trace the arrangement of the Saxon settlements with its village green, its homestead enclosures, its arable fields, its meadows, and common waste. King Stanley reached the highest dignity to which it could attain by acquiring the title of a borough, and the right of gallows, as is shown in the names of some of its enclosures, such as Hanging Close and Hangman's Grove.

Many of the churches were founded by Saxons and rebuilt in later times, of which Avening Church is one. Agriculture was their chief occupation.

Probable proof of the local settlement of the Hiviccas is still preserved for us in the local names of Pagan's Wick, Pagan's Hill, and Randwick; in the former cases the harsh "g" having since been softened into a "y", as is often the case in our own as well as in other tongues, particularly in the name Paignton and in the family name of "Payne."

THE DANES.

In their turn the Danish invaders left memorials in the camps at Minchinhampton and other places. There is a Danish camp on the east side of Hampton Common, the largest of its kind in England. Then there is Daneway at the head of the Chalford Valley, through which they came, and Woeful Dane Bottom, which to this day is the name of a spot near Minchinhampton. Here they suffered a great defeat, and on the site is an old stone pillar, which tradition states was placed with two similar stones to mark the spots where three Danish chieftains were slain. From our local hills we may see

a picture of the final rout of the Danes, for their land defeat took place at Cambridge, in Slimbridge Parish, and the destruction of their sea power at Buttington-on-the-Wye, where Alfred held them up before attacking them by land on both sides.

This neighbourhood is indeed rich in historical associations. There is Avening, but a short distance away, which was a royal manor of the kings of Wessex and of the early kings of England; and, earlier still, it was a British village of the "Dobuni." Stone coffins and other relics of British times have been unearthed here.

A most important local event in our long past history was the coming of the Mercian kings to reside at Stanley, an event which, among other things, probably gave names to Cainscross (otherwise Keyness or King's Cross), to Ryeford (meaning a Royal ford), and perhaps also to Dudbridge (Dodda's bridge—Dodda being a Mercian king). Both the latter names indicate the marshy character of the valley in those ancient days, and the impression made upon men's minds by the great feat of constructing the king's highway and bridging the stream; for it is most likely to this date that we must ascribe the first making of the road from Cainscross to Stonehouse and King Stanley.

Woodchester, again, became famous when Earl Godwin rose to power, for there on the site of the famous Roman villa his wife founded her priory, of which the name still survives, as does a part of the ruins of the church.

The Norman Conquest brought an infusion of new ideas, which, although most marked, were not lasting. The Saxons were crushed by an iron hand, but they were not subdued. The racial characteristics persisted, and when later there came a freer intermingling of the two peoples the nation was possessed of almost complete qualifications for its future destiny.

To Henry II. is ascribed the grant of a charter to the ancient borough of King Stanley, permitting the lord to hold two fairs a year, of which the Whitsuntide Fair is

still maintained, although shorn of its former glories and use. Nor can we forget that it was from Frampton that Henry carried off his fair Rosamond.

VILLAGE LIFE.

During the Middle Ages the isolation of its inhabitants and of its general economic arrangements seems to have been the most distinguishing features of the English village; in fact, each village appears to have been an almost self-sufficing industrial unit, and its people lived in well-nigh complete independence of others.

The gradual breaking down of this exclusiveness was a movement of extreme slowness, the story of which makes an interesting chapter in economic history. But even in very early times it was impossible for the villagers to refrain entirely from communication with the outside world, or to supply their wants completely by their own efforts and from their own resources. The great fairs, of which one was held in those days near Minchinhampton, and at other places, provided meeting places for people from all parts of England as well as for foreign merchants; but, after all, the fairs interfered but little with the everyday routine of the English village. Each village had its mill, the property of the lord of the manor, and the best millstones then used came from the neighbourhood of Paris. Iron for the ploughshares generally came from Spain; tar, needed when the disease of scab broke out among the sheep, was imported from Norway. With the exceptions noted each rural group provided for its own need from sources within its borders, and did not traffic with others.

Generally the villager lived his life in the regularity of isolation; he had little change, and, maybe, little desire for it.

PEACEFUL INDUSTRY.

The villages on the Cotswolds for many centuries played an important part in English industrial history. Wool-farming on these hills was at its best during the

fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries, and England during this period was a great exporter of wool. There were multitudes of sheep fed upon the common grazing grounds, and it is said that these yielded such fine wool, and so white, that it was coveted not only in other parts of this land, but in foreign countries too. Sheep farming upon a large scale was fostered, which eventually brought in its train a wealthy merchant class, and contributed in no small degree to the stability of the many villages that lie along the hill tops or nestle in the obscurity of the vales. The wool trade, indeed, is said to have been the key to an important period of English history, in that it furnished the sinews for the Hundred Years War. With regard to the Cotswolds in particular, it explains the presence of many noble churches and fine manor houses.

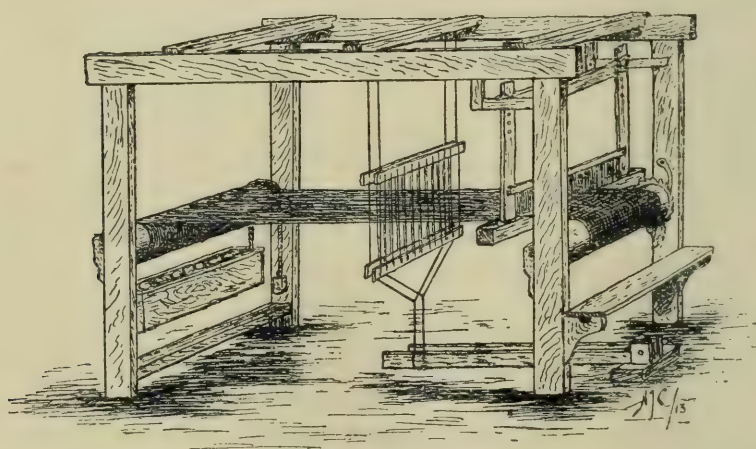
DUTCH INFLUENCE.

Flanders was the chief importer of our Cotswold wool, which country eventually sent us the Flemish weavers for the introduction of cloth weaving into our neighbourhood. Fuller says "That a prime Dutch cloth-maker in Dursley had the surname 'Web' given him by King Edward III." Web or Webb can be traced in connection with cloth making in Dursley, Uley, Nailsworth, and district for over five hundred years.

Edward III. became our greatest Royal benefactor by settling Flemish weavers here, who were followed generation after generation by other Dutchmen, so that our neighbourhood is now rich in names of Flemish and Dutch origin—Hague, Prout, Morse, and others. Probably Clutterbuck, as well as Weaver and Webster, were given in despair of the old Dutch names. In later years Spanish immigrants brought the names of Fawka and Seville, as Huguenots brought those of Marchant and Malpas, as well as some of the technical names used in the manufacture of cloth.

It is said that teazles were first used in the neighbourhood in 1360. All down these valleys from 1580 onwards could be heard the clack of the looms and the whirr of

the spinning-wheels. Those were busy times, when weavers were also spinners and worked at home, when steam engines were unheard of, and when it was doubtful whether even water power was used to supplement the power of strong arms and skilful hands. When factories did not bring desolation to the lovely landscapes, and when the Cotswolds were a great pasture ground. In the subsequent development of the locality came the enclosures of the common fields and common wastes, the making of the canal and the movement of the population,



HANDLOOM WEAVING.

and change of habits due to the introduction of steam and the making of the railways.

CAINSCROSS.

Cainscross itself appears to have but little history behind it that can be recorded, and what there is lies in its connection with other parishes. It was formerly in the parishes of Randwick and Stonehouse. That part of it including the four cross roads, and where our Society's building stands, down to recent times was in the former parish. Randwick was anciently in the parish of Thornbury, and is first mentioned as a separate parish in the reign of Edward I. (1272-1307). This village has given its name to Randwick in Australia, which, with the

exception of Sydney, is the oldest municipal city in Australia. Mr. Simeon Pearce, an uncle of our late Secretary, was its sponsor and became its first mayor.

All the centre part of Cainscross down to Dudbridge and up to Hamwell Leaze or Hyett's field once belonged to Mr. John Moseley, a woolstapler, who died in 1771. The old store premises were in the same family in 1806, when a Mr. H. Jennings, maltster and baker, and a relative, occupied the shop and orchard with meadowland at Dudbridge, then part of an ancient mead and known as Common Huntley.

It would appear that the premises were used as a grocery and bakery business down to the time when the Society entered into possession, and it was from the last member of the Moseley family that the property was eventually purchased.

Many an old family, and it was usually the principal one, took its name from the locality in which the family resided and held lands.

In an old church record giving a proof of the age of one William le Marchal of Kynge Stanley (King Stanley) in the eighth year of Edward III. (1334), one of the witnesses was Hugh de Dodebrigge (Dudbridge). Again, in 1346, when aid was levied in Gloucestershire on the occasion of making Edward the Black Prince a knight, one Walter de Dodebrigge, of Paganhill, was called upon for his levy. This shows that Dudbridge was certainly a place of habitation before the fourteenth century.

Much historical information may be obtained from parish registers, and those of Woodchester Church appear to furnish an almost continuous record of the members of this family for the last four hundred years. The Woodchester registry goes back to the beginning of the sixteenth century, when the name there first appears, and later from 1669 to 1834 the registry records an unbroken line of twenty-seven names. Our present auditor, Mr. Sydney Dudbridge, is undoubtedly connected with the family in these Woodchester records, and we may reasonably conclude that the family is one and the same from its earliest mention in 1334.

DURSLEY DISTRICT.

The neighbourhood of Dursley has a long and interesting history, but its earliest records are not available. In Anglo-Saxon days Dursley was known as "Dersileye," the "ley" in old English meaning water. It played a great part in connection with its ancient lords, the Berkeleys of Dursley, who had their home here long before the Norman FitzHardings had set their feet in England. They were of royal blood, Roger de Berkeley, Lord of Dursley, being a cousin of Edward the Confessor. This Roger de Berkeley possessed the manor of Dursley when the Doomsday Book was compiled, and with it were also a great many other manors. The ancient residence of his family was at Dursley Castle, which stood in the fields behind the "Bell and Castle" inn. The same Roger de Berkeley founded the priory at Leonard Stanley. The family was Saxon in origin, but appeared to get on well with their Norman sovereigns until the death of Henry I. In the dispute between Matilda and Stephen for possession of the crown, they took the side of the latter; and when the son of Matilda became King, the Lord of Dursley had to forfeit his estates, which were given to Robert, the son of Harding, or FitzHarding, a rich citizen of Bristol, as a reward for services rendered to Matilda.

THE HOUSE OF BERKELEY.

King Henry II. undertook to build a castle for Robert FitzHarding at Berkeley, and he soon afterwards came to Berkeley and saw the building commenced. This Robert, however, was not allowed to take possession of the manor quietly, for Roger de Berkeley fought very keenly to retain his old possession. King Henry, therefore, stepped in as peacemaker, and smoothed matters over by giving Roger de Berkeley the manor of Dursley, on condition that he relinquished all claim to Berkeley. Inter-marriages between the two families followed, which ensured peace, and the FitzHarding family entered upon their new possession, and have held it—with the exception of a slight break—up to the present time. The great

hall of Berkeley Castle is considered one of the finest baronial halls in England. The four large stained glass windows on the right contain armorial bearings of the Berkeley family, and all their alliances from 1115 to 1785.

The Dursley Castle was held by descendants of the old Saxon Berkeleys of Dursley down to 1567, when it was sold, the family having drifted into poverty. The castle appears to have fallen into decay, and was eventually taken down for the sake of the materials. Dursley was spoken of in the thirteenth century as one of the five ancient boroughs of Gloucestershire, and was made a market town in 1471. It does not appear that the chief office of the town was designated by the title of mayor, but by that of bailiff, and those who occupied the office received the honourable title of alderman. In mediæval days it was a sign of relative freedom that the inhabitants of the borough could elect their own bailiff. It appears that the title of this office of bailiff existed before the Norman Conquest, and that the unchartered corporation of Dursley represents the most ancient form of English municipal institutions.

It is recognised that the most authentic history is the history of the Church, and it is very probable that Anglo-British Dursley became a Christian town at a very early period. Christianity had many adherents among the Roman soldiers. They had probably met and spoke with St. Paul, and upon going to Britain some of them would have been quartered in the Roman Aldershot at Uley Bury. It may therefore be reasonably concluded that as Christianity had become almost universal among the Romans before the fifth century, it had become so among their British subjects. At any rate, the district round Dursley was within the great Christian trilateral, of which the abbey of Gloucester formed part in the seventh century.

OWLPEN.

Close to Uley is the little hamlet of Owlpen, which is chiefly celebrated for its ancient manor house. It is said that Queen Margaret slept in the mansion on the

eve of the battle of Tewkesbury; indeed, the Owlpen Manor estate is one of the earliest in the country.

NIBLEY.

Within easy distance of Dursley is the picturesque village of North Nibley, said to be the birthplace of William Tyndale. On Nibley Knoll, on the slopes of which the village stands, is the monument erected to Tyndale's memory. This was erected in 1863 at a cost of £1,550. The chamber of the monument contains a black-letter copy of Tyndale's New Testament and an autograph letter of Tyndale's.

WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE.

Wotton-under-Edge, the home of our No. 4 Branch, is British-Saxon in its origin. In earliest times it was called Coed Woeld; hence the double name and meaning, from "Coed" in the British language and "Woeld" in Saxon, signifying "Wood Town under Ridge." It lies in a healthy situation, and as a Cotswold town has a history of some importance. The old town, which stood in the rear of the present one, was destroyed by fire in the reign of King John (1199-1216). On its restoration in the time of Henry III. (1216-1272) a charter was granted to the Berkeleys, who held the manor of Wotton in jointure, empowering them to hold markets and a fair, also constituting it a "borough." The corporate body was to consist of a mayor and aldermen, the mayor being chosen at the annual court-leet, and after his term of office he was to become an alderman. The market was to be held weekly on Friday, and the fair yearly to last three days.

The Corporation of Wotton existed for 600 years, and ceased in March, 1886, when the borough was dissolved by the operation of the Municipal Corporation Act of that year. The silver mace was presented to Lord FitzHarding in 1886, to be kept as an heirloom in the family. There is a former Wotton mace in Berkeley Castle, dated 1300; also the chalice, or Godwin Cup, which is dated 1066, and is the oldest known piece of plate in England. It is known that Flemish weavers

came over and settled in this town at a very early period. Madox, in his history of the Exchequer, mentions that cities and towns paid fines to King John, that they might buy and sell dyed cloth. Wotton has always been well occupied with clothmakers or clothiers, as they were formerly called, and in the past centuries doubtless shared in the prosperity which peaceful industry brought to Cotswold towns and villages. The arms of Wotton are the "Woolpack," still seen in Church Street over the entrance to Perry's almshouses. In its religious

history Wotton had two martyrs burnt by fire in the old town (Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*), and it is probable that the old town meeting-house originated in the ejection of the Nonconformist ministers in 1662, while it is well known that the celebrated Rowland Hill was connected with the tabernacle for many years.



Lisle House Entrance.

The manor was under the great lordship of Berkeley, and played its part in the fortunes and turmoils in connection with that great house.

Thomas Talbot, Viscount Lisle, the head of one branch of the family, resided in the borough of Wotton at Lisle House, and, in order to settle the 192 years' law suit, sent a challenge to William, sixth Lord Berkeley. The parties met on March 20th, 1470, with about one thousand men each on Nibley Green, when 150 men were slain, including Lord Lisle.

Wotton is rich in charities. There is a Bluecoat School, so called from the costume. There are almshouses in Church Street, built in 1638 by Hugh Perry, Esquire, alderman of London, who was a native of this place. It boasts of one of the oldest Grammar Schools in England, which was founded in 1385 by Katherine (Lady Berkeley), and is now used as a day and boarding-school for boys.

It may be said that Wotton has seen better days. The former power and wealth enjoyed by the industrious clothweavers have passed away, and the population is but half of what it once was. During the past twenty or thirty years, however, new industries have been developed, which have arrested the period of decline and should in a measure eventually bring back the prosperity of former days.

PURPOSE OF HISTORY.

To correctly gauge and fully know ourselves we must study history, and certainly local history. A purpose runs through the centuries, and we are in our day bound to find out and answer what Ruskin asks—Whence? Why? Whither? The careful student of the history of this neighbourhood and its relics of the past can trace the evolution from the savage Briton up to the civilised man of to-day, with his vastly improved opportunities, his extended power in the counsels of the nation, and a measure of freedom to combine for mutual purposes. During the nineteenth century there were many developments in this direction, and perhaps of all forms of combination none made a larger appeal to the working classes than the Co-operative movement.



LEONARD STANLEY CHURCH
(Built in the time of King Stephen).

CHAPTER II.

Earlier Co-operation.

THE CO-OPERATIVE IDEA—ROBERT OWEN—CO-OPERATIVE
ASSOCIATIONS—ROCHDALE PIONEERS—THE C.W.S.

CO-OPERATION is no new doctrine or faith, and as a principle is as old as the family. Indeed, the more closely we look into the facts of life the more clearly we perceive the enormous advantage which arises out of the fact that, through the necessities of their existence, Co-operation is unconsciously forced upon men. A substantial economy is effected when people pull together. From the days of the cave-men Co-operation has existed in some form, and it would appear that as our ideas expand in the direction of mutual aid, just in that proportion do we advance towards a higher civilisation. In the Middle Ages we had involuntary co-operation of the village community and the trade guild. These guilds were the forerunners of the friendly society, trade union, and Co-operative Society of modern times. The associative spirit which was so essentially theirs helps us to estimate the life of the mediæval craftsmen somewhat from a modern standpoint. Every important town had its guild. London especially had a guild for practically every trade, and some of them became exceedingly strong and attained great influence. They flourished exceedingly in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, but from various causes dwindled to comparative insignificance in the sixteenth century. Much of their property, acquired by the careful management of many generations, and which provided members with sick, old-age, and other allowances, was confiscated during the raid of Henry VIII. upon religious endowments. But if these guilds could be

dissolved and their property confiscated, the associative idea could not be suppressed, for the memory of them lingered on in the years to come.

THE CO-OPERATIVE IDEA.

The revival of Co-operation, in so far as trading is concerned, was a long time in asserting itself. In the meantime, we find the idea taking shape in many other forms, such as the establishment of hospitals, orphanages, asylums, and various other charitable institutions, which, if not strictly Co-operative from a business point of view, at least embody the sentiment of mutual aid.

The earliest recorded experiment in Co-operation after the lines as we know it dates back to 1795, and was not so much an attempt to carry out any definite theory of association, as a dim groping after some means of escaping from the misery caused by the high prices of food prevailing at that period. This first experiment was the establishment of a Corn Mill at Hull, and which received considerable assistance from various members of the Hull Corporation. The number of members at its inception was 1,400; and the mill continued its existence with varying success until 1895, when, after working for a century, the Society was wound up. There were a number of other Societies started in the few years following, but they were all primarily engaged in a manufacturing process, either in flour milling or baking.

ROBERT OWEN.

It was Robert Owen who caused men to think about Co-operation, and time and need, failure and gain, and the good sense and devotion of working people have made the Co-operative movement. Robert Owen rose from the position of a shop assistant to be a leader of men, the manager of great cotton mills in Manchester and in New Lanark, near Glasgow. Of all his great schemes for the improvement of the workers' position we have not the space to deal with more than to say that he tried profit-sharing in his mills, was instrumental in getting passed the Factory Act of 1819, and as a result of the



THE RUINS OF THE CENTRAL PREMISES AFTER THE FIRE IN 1867.



THE CENTRAL STORES AS ERECTED IN 1868.



BERKELEY CASTLE.



OWLPEN MANOR HOUSE, NEAR ULEY, DURSLEY.

stimulus given by his teachings there arose Co-operative Societies, trade unions, and other similar organisations.

In a paper started by Owen in 1821, called the *Economist*, we find an intimation of the starting of a "Co-operative and Economical Society;" wherein was stated that his new system was co-operation on the part of all the members for every purpose of social life. These were advanced ideas, and, considering the terrible condition of the people in those times, it is not surprising that they should take hold of anything which appeared to have in it the germ of hope and to be the road to better things.

CO-OPERATIVE ASSOCIATIONS.

Co-operative associations were started in various parts of the country. In 1830 the number had risen to 250, and in 1833 to 400. Very few of these were, however, situated in the South of England, although this movement had its inception at Brighton. The proposals of this particular Society were very far-reaching. Its objective was to find work for the members, the method to be adopted being that of Co-operative trading, and by retaining the profits in the Society to accumulate a fund for the purpose of self-employment; also to purchase land, live upon it, cultivate it themselves, and produce any manufactures they pleased. Such were some of the ideas. The Society began very humbly, and for a time met with some success. In the first year they did a weekly trade of £40; but the accumulation of capital became a source of friction, and some of the members withdrew their shares. Many of these Societies did really reach the further stage of employing their own members in the manufacture of textiles, boots and shoes, clothing, and furniture. Their aims and methods bordered too much on the ideal, and they furthermore burdened themselves over much with rigid rules. But, most important, they shared profits on the basis of capital invested. The incentive to trade was greatest with those who were the most wealthy; the humble and most needy had little or no inducement to trade, yet it was to improve the lot of these that it was originally started. Generally speaking, however, the

spirit of the early Co-operators was fairly accurately expressed by the text prefixed to one of the sets of rules: "They helped every one his brother, and every one said to his brother, 'Be of good cheer.'"

But the time was not yet for the complete success of Co-operation. These early Societies one by one dropped out, till only a very few were left. Many were ruined because they could not obtain the protection of the law; others were so small in the number of their members, so deficient in capital and limited in the business done, that great results could not be accomplished; and when the novelty of the thing had worn off a state of apathy set in, which was fatal.

The Societies of this first period were unable in many ways to cope with the competition of the time, and rather avoided than fought with it, in the hope that the principle of Co-operation would be quite sufficient to make them prosper. The working classes were not versed in business methods in those days, and inclined to give up in despair when things went wrong. They had, moreover, no successful examples to guide them; on the other hand, they had everything to learn, few to teach, and many to criticise and discourage.

With it all Owen and his disciples worked hard preaching and teaching, though at the time their labours had the appearance of failure; but the seed then sown bore fruit in after years. Others who followed saw some of the weaknesses of these early schemes, and out of the lessons which Owen's efforts taught we have had success in later years.

The modern movement as we know it began with the distributive Store at Rochdale, and the practice of Societies to-day differs but slightly from the Rochdale Store established in 1844. They combined their capital to buy in bulk, ensuring that the goods were pure in quality. The profits were divided, not according to the capital held, but in proportion to the purchases each member made. These profits were paid out in dividends, but the members were encouraged to invest them in the Society at a fixed rate of interest.

ROCHDALE PIONEERS.

The Rochdale Pioneers Society began in a small way. They numbered twenty-eight, and contributed as many pounds between them, which were raised by subscriptions of 2d. each per week; but if their means were small, their ambitions were great. Whatever their objects may have been, we gather that these were no less than to become their own manufacturers and self-employers. The starting

of this Store was the beginning of one of the greatest social movements of the nineteenth century. The Society was registered on October 24th, 1844, and some of its views were set forth as follows:—

The objects of the Society are to raise capital, and form arrangements for the pecuniary benefit and the improvement of the social and domestic condition of its members.

To establish a Store for the sale of provisions, clothing, &c.

To purchase or build houses in which members may reside.

To commence the manufacture of such articles as the Society may determine upon for the employment of such members as may be without employment, or who may be suffering in consequence of repeated reduction in wages.

And further:—

As soon as practicable the Society shall proceed to arrange the powers of production, distribution, education, and government, or, in other words, to establish a self-supporting colony of united interests.

These objects were still perhaps on the idealistic side, but there was something more practical in the working than in the earlier Stores we have described. The Store



First Store in Rochdale.

was opened with some trepidation under critical eyes, the titters of onlookers, and the chaff of others. It goes without saying that there were difficulties. How could it be otherwise with such a meagre capital, and inexperienced storekeepers? They were, however, a staunch set of Co-operators, and bought at the shop because it was their duty to buy; each was determined to work, and willing to sacrifice, in order that the Store should succeed.

The venture proved a successful one, for numbers of people were not slow to realise that they could purchase as cheaply as elsewhere, besides the advantage of receiving their share of the profits. Increased support was, therefore, forthcoming, and in a short time the membership rose to 100. Everywhere men began to talk of the new system of shopkeeping, and of its possibilities. It was spoken of in the mills and in the weaving sheds, by the coal miner in the pit, and the man in the street.

In ten years' time the Society had 1,400 members and a capital of £11,000.

There is a saying that "Nothing succeeds like success," and with the real progress of the one Store was laid the foundation of the great movement as we know it to-day. The influence of Rochdale's success spread to other towns and villages, particularly in Lancashire and Yorkshire, and Store after Store was opened on the model of the one we have mentioned.

To these Pioneers a debt of gratitude is due. Men who in times of difficulty rendered to the cause a loyalty and devotion such as this were working out the problems of life, without noise and without the hope of reward.

With the spread of retail Co-operation, and the establishment of many retail Stores, a further step was needed for the better progress of the movement. Each of these Stores had to fight its own battles in the competitive world and buy from sources which had more sympathy with the opponents of Co-operation than with Co-operators themselves; and, furthermore, some connection was required whereby the retail Stores could be linked together for their better protection, and the purpose of collective buying.

Up to 1862, however, there was no legal sanction for federal action between Societies. In that year the Industrial and Provident Societies Act was amended, and the road thus made open to collective action.

THE C.W.S.

At that time there were about 300 retail Societies, and steps were immediately taken towards establishing a Wholesale Society. In 1863 the North of England Co-operative Wholesale Society was registered, and began business in the following year. Its first method was to supply goods to Societies at cost price, plus a percentage for expenses. This plan very soon had to be given up in favour of selling at market rates, and sharing the profits with purchasers in proportion to the amount purchased.

The Society was a success from the first, and to its influence much credit must be given for the great expansion of the movement during the past fifty years. It has welded the Societies together, and become of itself so great a power as to be practically unassailable.



MARKET HOUSE, DURSLEY
(Built in the time of Queen Anne).



CHAPTER III.

Social Conditions of the People.

GREAT CHANGES—COST OF LIVING—CLOTHING INDUSTRY—LOCAL INSTITUTIONS—METHODS OF TRADING—ONE MAN ONE SHOP—THE ECONOMY OF CO-OPERATION.

CHANGES.

IN the pages which follow our purpose is to trace the development of Co-operation in and around Cainscross. The Cainscross Co-operative Society was founded in 1863, just about the time that the working people of this country were beginning to make themselves a force in national affairs. A decade before, the Chartist movement was voicing their demands for Parliamentary reform, and Co-operation and trade unionism were establishing themselves as voluntary agencies for the regulation of trade and industry. This was a period of rapid change in system and method. England was being linked up with railway communications, which revolutionised the mode of travel and transit of goods. The introduction and development of machinery had had a potent influence in the occupation of the people. Some industries were extended, while new ones were constantly arising. The staple industry in these valleys at one time was handloom weaving, but with the improvement of the loom and its adaptation to steam power came the death-blow to the handloom. During the transition many men and women were left wholly unemployed, or employed so irregularly as to make life a constant struggle with adversity. From the latter part of the eighteenth to the middle of the nineteenth century these changes were proceeding, the effect being to render the employment of the working

people more and more uncertain as time went on. Then came the great war between the Northern and Southern States of America, the effects of which brought about a cotton famine. The result of this was probably more keenly felt in the North of England; yet no part of the country escaped its effects, either directly or indirectly. When labour was abundant and unorganised we cannot be surprised that the conditions were degrading in their severity, working hours were long, and wages low. Added to this, the prices of food and other necessities were, upon the average, much higher than they are to-day.

COST OF LIVING.

In looking over the purchases made by the Society in the first year of its existence, we find that flour was 5s. to 6s. per sack higher than the average price of the past two years. Sugar could not have been sold at less than 6d. and 7d. per lb., and the cheapest tea at less than 3s. per lb. On the other hand, coal was 15s. per ton, while other chief necessities of everyday consumption, consisting of butter, cheese, and bacon, were very similar in price to what they are to-day. Some other articles less important than those mentioned show a wide difference. As an example, petroleum cost wholesale 2s. 9d. per gallon, wax candles 8d. per lb., candied peel 11d. per lb., and salt 1s. 3d. per bar. With such conditions as these prevailing we can quite understand that it was not a case of what people could do with, but what they could do without. As people become more enlightened, and particularly the more thoughtful men and women, they are not content to remain in poor circumstances, and will seek such remedies as may seem best to improve their social and economic conditions.

CLOTHING INDUSTRY.

This neighbourhood, so long a great centre of the clothing industry, has remained for a long period in a stationary position, and some of the villages to-day have a smaller population than fifty years ago. Old people

can tell of a mill here and a mill there that has disappeared, and the districts away from immediate railway communication have probably been those to suffer most. Of these we may mention Wotton-under-Edge and Horsley in particular. Yet there are those interested in the cloth industry who say that our neighbourhood produces as much cloth as ever it did. That may be so, but, with the speeding-up of machinery, the fact remains that our chief local industry has not advanced in proportion to the needs of the population. There are doubtless reasons for this, of which the most cogent may be the better facilities in the North, through the proximity of the coal fields, rail communication, and more central markets.

When local industries are insufficient to absorb the growing population it is not so well for labour, and it inevitably means that the surplus must move to other districts where opportunities are greater, or emigrate. This is what has been taking place in most of the towns and villages of our neighbourhood for over fifty years, and other lands have been made all the richer by the influx of people which circumstances have not permitted us to retain.

From this it must not be inferred that there has been no social and material improvement of our people. Indeed, we may venture the opinion that the best use has been made of the available resources, and the general condition of our working population will compare most favourably with those in other parts of the country. We have in our midst a capable and intelligent class of people, which at no time has been lacking in initiative or failed to grasp the opportunities as they have presented themselves.

LOCAL INSTITUTIONS.

Two movements which have had a potent influence in improving the social condition of the working classes have been the adoption of Industrial Co-operation and the extension of the benefit societies. The former was adopted in the neighbourhood after its acceptance

in other parts of the country, but the dividing benefit society, as at present constituted, was initiated in our midst.

There is a similar principle in both of these institutions, which may account in a measure for some of the success achieved by each. In the Co-operative Store, after all the expenses and charges are met, the profits are divided between the members in proportion to their individual purchases. The dividing benefit society, at the end of each year, after meeting its liabilities, likewise credits its members with the surplus profits according to the number of shares held. Co-operation has gone on extending throughout the country, and the principles originated in the Stroud benefit societies have been adopted by other towns in Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, and other counties. Taking the working class as a whole throughout the districts covered by the Cainscross and Ebley Co-operative Society, it would be a fair estimate to say that over 90 per cent will be connected with one or another of the institutions mentioned.

METHODS OF TRADING.

In comparison with fifty years ago great strides have been made in every point of life and in the methods of doing business: working hours, wages, education, the quality of food and clothing differ considerably. During the first half of the nineteenth century the truck and credit systems were practised everywhere. The worker was in the hands of the foreman, who forced him to spend his wages at certain shops which yielded a profit to himself, and it was not an uncommon occurrence for the foreman to be a licensed victualler also. The ordinary consumer was generally in the toils of the shopkeeper, through the baneful system of credit trading. In this neighbourhood the credit system, fifty or sixty years ago, was practically the only one upon which business was conducted, and it is a great pity that the Co-operative Society did not make a stand against it. It is not for us to blame the earlier members for what they did in this respect, because at best they had much difficulty in starting, and afterwards

in keeping the Society going. Local custom is hard to overcome, and doubtless there was great reluctance in departing from that which was so prevalent. The family grocer and baker had fostered the habit, and it was a tie that kept the customer bound, in a sense, to his tradesman, because he was never out of debt. Cash trading was, and is, the first principle of Co-operation, and it is to be regretted that in the West we have not followed this course. Getting into debt, as we know, never helps to thrift, and the best members of a Co-operative Society are those who recognise the value of prompt payments.

METHOD OF DOING BUSINESS.

There have been many changes in this district in the way of doing business. When the Society started it was a case of one man one shop. A grocer was a grocer and nothing else; indeed, the whole of the neighbouring towns and villages were studded with the "one man" business. Such a system, as we know, was very wasteful, and although it may have supported—we believe, indifferently—a large body of tradespeople, it did not conduce to the social well-being of the community, nor yet raise the standard of comfort among the workers.

The economy of Co-operation was responsible for the adoption of a new system of trading. The Store meant the concentration of many trades under one control and in one set of premises, with the consequent advantage of a cheapening in the cost of distribution and the expenses of working. The saving resulting therefrom is returned to the members constituting the Society, who own the Store, either in the price charged for goods or in the form of a dividend.

The adoption of Co-operation may seem a hardship to the class of small traders, and doubtless it may be attended with some inconvenience; but who can now pretend to set up private against public interest? Assuredly if we are to defend the superseding of hands by machinery, we cannot at the same time say that a cumbrous and costly mode of distribution of the necessities of life is to be maintained for the sake of the individuals

who think they have a personal interest in it. One thing is clear—that which substitutes an economical for an extravagant method of regulating trade is attended by a saving in which the whole community benefit.

It would seem that where any volume of business is to be done individual shopkeeping must give place to collective trading, either upon the Co-operative plan of sharing profits between the purchasers, or on the company basis of sharing profits between the holders of capital only. At any rate, the whole tendency in retail trading is towards the big shop. In our own districts this tendency is already apparent. The Store to-day is drawing trade to it at a greater rate than ever before, and the force of circumstances is demanding more commodious premises in order to cope with the growing business. Any system which proves successful quickly attracts attention, and draws upon it many imitators. It is very probable that successful Co-operation brought into existence the multiple shops, of which there are now many in our midst, whose sole concern is that of providing profit for the capitalists who have money invested therein.

It should be noted that these concerns, while drawing profit from the community, do but little to foster local patriotism, whereas the Co-operative system has the merit of binding the individuals in the community into a closer brotherhood of mutual interest.



CHAPTER IV.

Early Local Efforts in Co-operation.

FIRST NAILSWORTH SOCIETY—THE OLD WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE
CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY—THE FIRST STROUD SOCIETY—
MISTAKEN THEORIES—MR. GEO. HOLLOWAY.

BEFORE proceeding to deal with the Society in which we are most interested, it may be useful to glance at some other efforts made towards Co-operation in the district. For Cainscross and Ebley was not the first to espouse the cause.

FIRST NAILSWORTH SOCIETY.

It was in 1861, through the visits of residents to towns where it was already established, that Co-operation began to be talked about in Nailsworth, and a meeting of several of the inhabitants was held in the British Schoolroom for the purpose of forming a Co-operative Society. Between £100 and £200 of shares were taken up at this meeting, and a Treasurer, Secretary, and Committee were appointed. By September the nominal amount of share capital had increased to £500. At the end of the month the Store was opened for the sale of provisions, and during the first week the trade exceeded the expectations of the promoters.

In November the first Quarterly Meeting was held, with an attendance of about eighty members. The Committee and members had great hopes and confidence in their Store, and, from the remarks of various speakers, were of opinion that it would prove of essential benefit to its numerous supporters, and be the means of fairly regulating the prices of commodities. A dividend of 1s. 9d. in the £ on purchases was declared, together with

interest at five per cent on the capital subscribed. Co-operators are nothing if not social, and Nailsworth Co-operators, imbued with this spirit, and with the consciousness of success which appeared to be attending their new venture, decided to celebrate the end of their second quarter by a tea and meeting. The idea of Co-operation had fairly taken hold of the people, and they were eager to hear more about it, and how best to apply it in practical form. The gathering was one of the largest ever seen in the Subscription Rooms, and many persons had to be refused admission. The tea was followed by a public meeting, presided over by C. Humphrey, Esq., and speeches on the movement were given by five or six people.

A report was also presented on the Society's position. From this we gather that after five months' working the number of members had reached nearly 150, who had subscribed 700 shares, and again a dividend of 1s. 9d. in the £ was declared. Much was hoped from this meeting, and the Society continued to increase both in membership and trade.

In the following quarter, however, the dividend dropped to 1s. in the £, but this did not damp the enthusiasm for the Co-operative Store. In November of 1862 another tea and meeting was held, at which it was reported that the membership had gone up to 180, and the shares subscribed to 1,000. At this meeting Mr. J. C. Fane (of Manchester) gave an address on Co-operation, in the course of which he spoke of the necessity of good and honest management, combined with consistent and ardent support on the part of the membership. Another speaker who followed him affirmed that the people of Nailsworth were then saving £400 per annum in the price of their bread through the influence of the Nailsworth Co-operative Society.

The balance sheet for the December quarter of 1862 showed sales amounting to £600. 10s., with a profit of £45. 5s. 7d., which admitted of a dividend of 1s. 6d. in the £. The capital had further increased, and a strong point was made of the fact that the public at large could purchase many articles of consumption at least 5 per cent

cheaper than they could before the Store was opened. Furthermore, the Society was providing a safe and profitable investment for their hard-earned savings.

In February, 1863, the Annual Meeting was held, and Mr. Henry Bruton, who presided, reviewed the year's working. The Society had shown steady progress, and, in the words of the Chairman, "had passed the precarious days of infancy, and bids fair to ripen into maturity." Throughout 1863 a fairly steady business was done, and the Society continued to have the support of many influential people in the neighbourhood, who saw in the movement a means whereby the social conditions of the working people could be improved. At a meeting held in December several local gentlemen were present in support of the Store. These included Matthew Bridges, Esq. (of Woodchester), who presided, Rev. W. L. Mills, and Messrs. A. S. Leonard and G. Stephens, who were partners at the Holcombe Mills.

The two latter assisted to start a Club in connection with the Society, the members of which contributed a sum of 3d. per week, and in return received an allowance of 7s. per week during sickness, also medicine, medical attendance, and an allowance for burial. This Club, however, through lack of continued support, had a short existence, and ended in a loss to the contributors.

In the Committee's report of May 7th, 1864, there was evidenced the same confidence in the Society, which was said to be in a thoroughly healthy condition, and bidding fair to greatly increase its present prosperity. In the two and a half years it had been established a sum of £260 had been distributed in dividends.

The continuous prosperity of the Society had been largely due to the honest and capable management of Mr. Shipway, who, with others, had brought real enthusiasm and lofty ideals into the working of the Society. At the end of the June quarter this gentleman left to become Manager of the sister Society at Cainscross, and from this point the fortunes of the Nailsworth Society began to wane. Mismanagement eventually brought about insolvency, and in 1867 the Society

passed into the hands of Mr. George Smith as liquidator. The shareholders received first a sum of 5s. in the £, and on the winding up, which took place at a final meeting held on March 15th, 1870, a further small balance was distributed.

WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY.

Forty or fifty years ago Wotton-under-Edge was an industrial centre. It is not surprising, therefore, that the



PREMISES OF THE OLD WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE SOCIETY.

workers started a Co-operative Society in 1868. The shop was situated in Market Street, and among the original members were Messrs. S. Flowers, R. Cornack, S. Fisher, and Mr. Penly (father of Mr. C. M. Penly, of firework fame). Mr. Rowland Orchard was the first Secretary. The Society in the early years was worked with great enthusiasm, and good dividends were paid from the start. The balance sheets and reports were, however, curious documents, and the officials adopted methods that were not at all in line with those at the present day.

The Secretary appeared to have had practically the sole control of the Society, for, in addition to his own, he carried out the duties of Manager, with a woman to take charge of the shop. The periodical valuation of the stock was also entrusted to this gentleman, assisted by two of the Committee, and the auditing was done on the night of

the members' meetings, and occupied but a few minutes. No banking account appears to have been kept for many years. After a time the Society was affiliated with the Co-operative Union, and contributed to its funds, and in 1872, in spite of some official opposition, they resolved to join the Co-operative Wholesale Society.

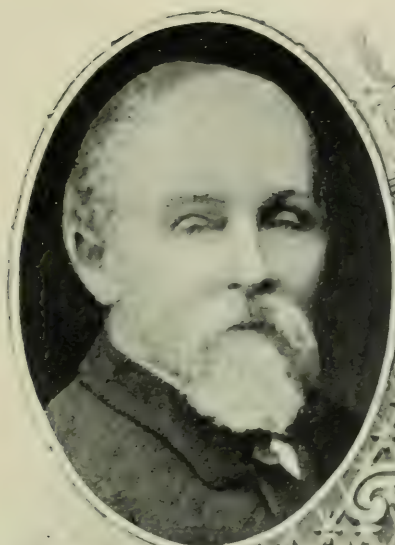
In their report for August, 1872, the Committee put their position clearly before the members in a very weak balance sheet. They stated that during the half year ending June six persons had joined and more were waiting to enter. One would judge from this that there had to be a probationary period before a member could be admitted. It was also stated that a few of the members did not purchase all they could at the Stores, but that as a body they were good purchasers according to the size of their families. From this it may be inferred that the purchases must have been good, for Wotton was not noted for the smallness of its families. A plea was made that a good lecturer was wanted in Gloucestershire to arouse the towns and villages. Hope was expressed for better results when they got into their new premises in Bradley Street, where it was proposed to commence baking, and supply members with nearly everything they might want.

In the following half year the new premises were occupied, and an increase in business was shown; yet the sales for the half year were only £1,068. The dividend on this occasion was 1s. 7d. in the £.

For the next two or three years the sales continued to increase, and eventually got to a high-water mark of £4,000 a year, and a dividend of 2s. 6d. in the £.

The Western Section of the Co-operative Union had a conference there in 1875, when the Gloucester, Newport, Clevedon, Buckfastleigh, and Wotton Societies were represented. A paper was read by Mr. Sargent on "The Best Means of Extending the Principles of Co-operation."

The same day a public meeting was held in the Town Hall, with Mr. Penly in the chair, and Messrs. Sargent, Clay, Jennings, and Arnold delivered stirring addresses on the benefits of working men combining for self-help and mutual benefits. Mr. Archer, who was then Secretary,



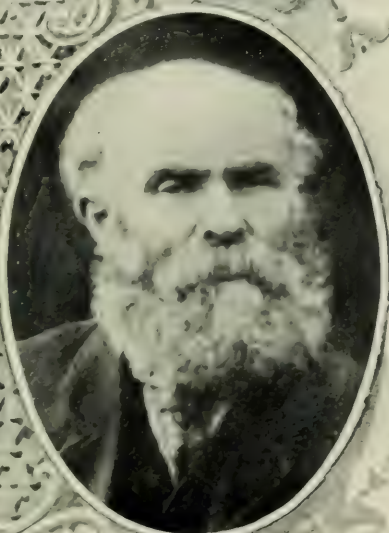
C. F. JEFFERIES,
Chairman, 1868-1877.



J. B. WEARE,
President, 1893-1898.



G. BRAIN,
Chairman, 1877-1889.



G. BROOKS,
Chairman, 1889-1893.

PAST CHAIRMEN.



R. M. WARNER.
Committee, 1888-1898;
President, 1898-1900.



SAMUEL SMART,
Committee, 1869-1878,
1885-1887.



WILLIAM PITT.
Committee, 1865-1885.



WILLIAM COLLINS.
Committee, 1861-4, 1896-9;
President, 1890-1900.



WILLIAM COLE.
Committee, 1880-1892,
1893-1902.

SOME PAST COMMITTEE-MEN.

stated that in the seven years the local Society had been established a trade of £14,000 had been done, and nearly £1,000 divided in profits amongst the members. At that period they had a share capital of £755 and 162 members.

This would appear to have been the best time in their history. In 1876 and 1877, with no apparent reason, a loss of confidence set in. The sales began to dwindle, and the share capital to be reduced. But few people made application for membership, and, with the withdrawals and lapses, the number of members gradually grew less. Mr. J. Clay, that pioneer and advocate of Co-operation in Gloucestershire, came to a meeting which was held in the declining years, and appealed strongly for a renewal of the Co-operative spirit among them. It was in vain, however, and in 1879 a large number of the members sent in notices to withdraw the whole of their shares. These were suspended, and a meeting of shareholders called.

On November 20th of this year it was agreed and declared that in consequence of the withdrawals it was impossible to carry on the Society without loss to the shareholders. It was therefore agreed to dissolve the Society under the provisions of the Act of 1876. At the date of its dissolution there were 110 members holding £394. 17s. 4d. in shares, and it is satisfactory to know that when the assets had been realised everyone was paid out in full. The Society had been in existence eleven years, and but for an extraordinary apathy on the part of the members, might have done good work for many more years. It is quite certain that Wotton was all the poorer when its doors were closed for good. Among the list of members was the name of Mr. S. Flowers, whose son in after years did much useful service when our present Branch was opened, also Mr. Nicholas May and Mr. Nun May, who were uncle and brother respectively of Mr. D. May, at present a member of the Committee at Cainscross. Only two of the old Wotton members are connected with the existing Branch; these are Messrs. N. May and Jesse Fowler.

FIRST STROUD SOCIETY.

With the establishment of several Societies in the district, particularly at Cainscross, Gloucester, and Wotton-under-Edge, it is not surprising that the people in Stroud desired to establish a Store in their midst. A public meeting was therefore held on May 13th, 1868, to consider the propriety of establishing a Co-operative Society for Stroud. Mr. P. H. Wood was in the chair, and Mr. S. Chapman, from the Cainscross Society, was the chief speaker. It was pointed out that the Cainscross Society, notwithstanding the great disaster* they had sustained in the previous winter, was increasing in business and in the number of its members, and that, after expenses were paid, could declare a dividend of 2s. in the £. Mr. H. Weight, also of Cainscross, spoke at this meeting. At the close of the proceedings some sixty persons came forward and were enrolled as members. Mr. S. Jones acted as Secretary.

Another meeting, which was largely attended, was held on June 27th, 1868. It was stated here that the most determined opposition would be offered by some of the tradesmen of Stroud, who had resolved to use every effort to crush the Society. There was an equal determination, however, on the part of those present to carry the matter through to a successful issue. In August premises were taken on the Cross, High Street, where a Store was opened in the same month. A Mr. Tuck was appointed Manager, and Mr. S. Chapman Secretary. The Society, however, was short-lived. What with local opposition, lack of adequate support, and inefficient management, liquidation was the inevitable result. The doors were closed in 1870, and at the winding-up the members received but 6s. in the £.

MISTAKEN THEORIES.

When the first Stroud Society was talked about in 1868 there were many mistaken theories as to the principles of Co-operation, and, likewise, much interested

* Page 46.

opposition, which very probably had an influence in its turn on political interests. The Stroud traders of that day were mostly of one political colour, and, obviously, one who expected to be a candidate for their support as the local representative in Parliament naturally sympathised with them in their interested opposition to a movement which then had few adherents.

MR. GEORGE HOLLOWAY.

Mr. George Holloway, who was afterwards M.P. for Stroud, wrote to the press commenting upon the meeting in Stroud to establish a Co-operative Society. In the course of his letter he said: "Most of us who have lived long enough to make the discovery have found that all is not gold that glitters. And if we put the Co-operative principle to the test of examination we find that its ultimate result is destructive of the best interests of society and especially calamitous to the working classes. It is exactly on a par with trade unions, and, whilst hurtful to society in general, is especially injurious to those whom it is intended to benefit." The man who was instrumental in establishing the "Holloway" benefit societies, which are as Co-operative in their principles as the Store system, could never have believed the statements he made, if he believed at all in the splendid institutions which bear his name. History has proved in the actual working of our system that Mr. Holloway's surmises were wrong, and were he with us to-day he would be one of the first so to acknowledge it.





CHAPTER V.

Origin of the Cainscross and Ebley Co-operative Society.

EBLEY IN 1863—SEEDS SOWN—FIRST CO-OPERATIVE MEETINGS—
SHOP TAKEN — FIRST MANAGER — SHOP OPENED — FIRST
BALANCE SHEET—A CRITICAL TIME—SOME HOPE.

HAVING given a brief outline of the earlier efforts of Co-operators, we come now to the period coincident with the opening of our Store.

In 1863 Ebley was a progressive village. The school-master had been abroad, and education was not unknown among the villagers. The teaching which had been inculcated in the minds of the people led them to think for themselves, and to evolve ideas with the object of bettering the social conditions of life. The people saw, too, that by united effort great ends could be accomplished.

The late Mr. H. Webb, at Ebley School, was a prince among teachers, and his influence was correspondingly great. Mr. Webb had a deep sympathy with all efforts for thrift, or, indeed, any movement which tended to improve the workers' lot. We are not therefore surprised that he was one of the apostles of Co-operation and pioneers of the Cainscross and Ebley Co-operative Society. He took a great interest in the movement from its beginning at Rochdale, and he even went to that home of present-day Co-operation at his own expense, in order to study on the spot the practical working of Co-operation.

About this time an incident occurred which had

an important bearing on the formation of our Society. Mr. Henry Weight, visiting Bristol in 1862, saw some pamphlets in the railway waiting-rooms, and, upon reading them, found they were a description of the origin and progress of the Rochdale Pioneers' Society, which had been left there by Mr. Handel Cossham. This was seed that fell upon good ground, for it interested Mr. Weight greatly, and caused him to think that what was good for Rochdale would be equally so for this neighbourhood. Accordingly the pamphlets were passed round among the workers at Messrs. Apperly and Clissolds' Dudbridge Works, where upwards of one hundred to one hundred and twenty people were employed. Thus Co-operation began to be talked about, and, as the subject was found to be of general interest, a preliminary meeting was arranged in the Ebley British School. Some forty to fifty people attended, and there was a general talk on Co-operative matters. Most were favourable to the idea of starting a local Society. Among those present and who spoke were Messrs. H. Webb, H. Weight, Joseph Smith, Joseph Weare, Stephen Close, and A. Lydeard. This meeting was adjourned. In the meantime these friends and others set about getting all the information possible, together with rules and by-laws from other Societies, and steps were taken to spread the news throughout the district. Another meeting was called, at which Mr. Hy. Webb acted as Chairman. All the available information was imparted to this meeting, and, after some discussion and many suggestions, the first step towards the formation of the Society was made by a resolution "that a Co-operative Store be established."

Names were then invited, and forty-three answered to the call to become members, and as many pound shares were promised to be taken.

A third meeting followed, at which the Committee and Officers were elected. These were: Mr. Jacob Staggs (Chairman), Messrs. Henry Hooper, Alfred Whiley, Stephen Close, William Gorton, and George Roome (Committee), Joseph Smith and Edwin Hale (Auditors), James Roome (Secretary), and Henry Webb (Treasurer).

The rules and by-laws were finally drawn up, and every person interested was full of hope and ready for business.

Inquiries were now made for a suitable place for the Store. The spot finally selected was the position of the present Cainscross Grocery Department, then a small shop that had been recently vacated by Mr. John Hall, grocer and baker, and owned by Mr. Moseley, a Cainscross gentleman, who was favourably inclined to, and indeed a friend of, Co-operation.

The first Manager was Mr. Maurice Gorton (of the Thrupp, but late of London). A baker was also engaged, and Mr. J. Roome, the Secretary, was deputed to assist in the shop when necessary. The Committee, with the officials named, did the buying. We are not told what salary the Manager was to receive, but the Committee, Secretary, and Treasurer were content to serve the cause without fee or reward.

The shop having been stocked with such goods as were considered necessary and suitable, ninety-two members were enrolled, and a subscribed capital of £130. 14s. 6d., the premises were duly and successfully opened.

There was not much ceremony, but many people interested were there. Some hopeful for the future success of the new system of trading, though there were doubtless many who predicted but a short existence. The shop did not present a very imposing appearance, and altogether the event of opening was deemed of so little importance from a public point of view as to be unworthy of even a line of notice in the local press.

It was a small beginning, many mistakes and difficulties were to follow, and one must often have thought it hardly worth while to be a Co-operator. But those were days when principles counted, and men saw the possibilities of great things. Experience only was needed. The school of experience is ever a dear one. This accounts for most of the struggles of our early Co-operators. Constant effort, however, made up for many things lacking, and the Co-operators of to-day should be thankful for the efforts of early members. The first years of the Society's

existence were such as to test the loyalty of all. They had always critics as onlookers, enemies ever waiting for signs of weakness and hoping for the doors to close for good. Their only friend was success and perseverance, which made them heedless of ridicule. Of that band of original members we have now with us the widows of Messrs. Samuel Smart, A. Lydeard, N. Lusty, and Charles Ashmead, to whom the shares were transferred on their husbands' decease. There are two other old members, viz., Mr. Mark Vick, who joined in September, 1863, and Mr. R. Beard, September, 1865.

Tuesday, June 16th, 1863, was the day of opening, and the first day's sales amounted to £3. 8s. 11½d. The first week's trading, only five days, the sales reached £41. 8s. 4d., which was not at all a bad beginning.

The first quarter's trade was very promising, sales steadily increased, and throughout the quarter there was a good influx of new members. By the end of September the number had increased to 144; and the share capital to £245. 6s. This quarter consisted of fifteen weeks, and on the first Saturday in November the first balance sheet was presented to the members. We can imagine with what satisfaction the presentation of this first report gave to the Committee and members. Already, after a few months of enthusiasm and careful nursing, their Store appeared to be on the high road to success. The report reads:

Your Committee, in submitting the first Quarterly Report, have great pleasure in stating that the number of members has continued to increase during the quarter; and they have confidence in stating that the Society is now in a prosperous condition. Our balance of profit is not so large as could be wished, owing chiefly to the many disadvantages met with in opening trade accounts. It has been disposed of in the following manner, viz., five per cent on members' paid-up shares, and 10d. in the £ on members' purchases. We hope this will be received with general satisfaction.

The quarter's sales were £737. 8s. 10½d. Taking the accounts through, one cannot help coming to the conclusion that they were properly drawn up, and show the true position of affairs. There was evidence, too,

that the business was being well conducted. A gross profit of 2s. 9½d. in the £ was made, 1s. 11½d. of which was taken up by the expenses of working, leaving 10d. in the £ available for dividend. Like most new ventures, trading facilities were, however, somewhat handicapped by shortage of capital, and although the stock was but £371, there was an amount owing to merchants of £226. Mr. Joseph Weare, who was one of the pioneers and an early Committee-man, told us in later years of the great difficulty they experienced in getting merchants to supply them with goods.

The quarter following opened well. As yet there had been no cloud on the horizon, and the Committee had every reason to believe that they were on the road to greater things. What little difficulties had presented themselves were well within their power to surmount. Shortage of capital would soon be got over as the Society became stronger, and more members joined, and they were still coming in at a fair rate. There were already members from Stonehouse and King Stanley, and in the districts nearer the Store there was a good population to work upon. It was, however, of the greatest importance that a steady progress should be maintained if other people were to be attracted to the Store. Adherence to principles does not appeal to everyone—something more tangible is required in the way of pecuniary benefit; and besides which they had to face the feeling of insecurity which attaches itself to a new concern.

In due course the results of the second quarter came to hand, and from the report presented it was seen that the Society had certainly improved its position. The Committee stated that the Society was in a more prosperous position than last quarter, and that they were enabled to pay five per cent on the paid-up shares, and declare a dividend of 1s. 3d. in the £.

The sales for the quarter were £760. 6s. 6d., an average of rather over £58 per week, while the share and loan capital had been increased by £80. 13s. The gross profit made was very little more than the previous quarter. The expenses, however, had been considerably reduced,

which accounted for the increase in the dividend. In fact, wages and the rent of the premises were practically the only real expenses in the business; the other items appearing were £1. 16s. 6d. for poor rates and £2. 4s. for bank charges. Up to the present the bread had been baked by one man, and delivered by him from a basket. The delivery of goods was obviated by the members carrying them home when purchased. Oil lamps were used for lighting purposes. By the end of this quarter the sum owing to merchants had been reduced to £154, and the Society had a bank balance of £39. Every effort was made to keep down expenses, and on this point, at least, the Committee were successful.

At the end of 1863 it looked as though the Society had got a fairly good start, but smooth waters had not yet been reached. The next twelve months was a trying and most critical period, and beset with many difficulties. But, thanks to the perseverance and grit possessed by the Society's leaders, these difficulties were gradually overcome.

Things began to go wrong in the beginning of 1864, and the Manager's services had to be dispensed with. On February 1st, 1864, Mr. J. Roome, who had acted as Secretary, became Manager, but the result of that quarter's trading showed a loss. This at once damped the enthusiasm and caused a set-back to the business. Indeed, it became a serious question as to the ultimate result of the labours of these early workers.

The next quarter also showed a loss, this time of £26, and, in the words of a member of the Committee, who is now living abroad, the Society was "fairly brought to its knees." One Committee-man withdrew, also some of the weaker members, but these were few in number. There was an evident resolve on the part of the members that every effort should be made to save the Society. At the two Quarterly Meetings for March and June no balance sheets were presented, but particulars of the trading results were given from a manuscript copy. Things could not long go on as they were, therefore another change in Managers was made, and in July, 1864, Mr. Shipway (of Nailsworth) was

appointed. At the settling up in the September quarter it was found that for the nine months a loss of about £90 had been made. With a commendable spirit it was resolved that a levy of 10s. upon each member should be made, in order to reduce the deficiency, and give the new Manager a fresh start. Many of the members paid the levy, but, as it could not be enforced, it naturally followed that some were loth to answer the call. It is greatly to their credit, however, that, whether profit or loss, most of the members maintained their spendings with the Society. The average weekly sales throughout that disastrous year worked out at £57, which was even slightly more than in the previous half year, when dividends were paid. Under the management of Mr. Shipway things began to look brighter, and it may be said of him that, throughout his twenty years' service with the Society, he proved a steady-going and capable Manager. His services were rendered at a time when Co-operation was but little understood, when people had a natural reluctance in having much to do with the movement in consequence of its many failures. It took time to live this feeling down, and it was something to keep the Society in a sound position with but little or no increase during such a period. On the structure which had been built up the time came in later years, with new men and newer methods, for greater results to become possible.

The year 1864 brought many changes: there had been two changes in Managers, one in Secretary, one in Auditor, and but two of the original Committee were left. William Browne was now Secretary, and among the newer members of the Committee were Messrs. C. F. Jefferies, Henry J. Weight, and George Jefferies.

In the December quarter of that year the adverse balance was got rid of, and a profit shown of £17. 10s. Expenses had been further cut down, but there was one regrettable feature in the balance sheet—the debts had grown from £26 in the first balance sheet to £139 in this, the sixth.

The Committee were now able again to meet the members in a sanguine frame of mind. In their report on

the December quarter they said: "Your Committee feel grateful in being able to announce that, notwithstanding the many oppositions of professed friends and open enemies, the Co-operative movement has stood firm, and survived hitherto all the prophecies and hopes of those who foretold its speedy downfall. And by its existence proves the judgment of its friends, who have stood closely by it. They also feel gratified in being able to announce that the Society appears to take a deeper hold upon its members, and to attract the notice of many others who have not yet enlisted themselves under the flag of the working man's true friend, Co-operation."

The dividend declared on this occasion was 10d. in the £, but it should be mentioned that no checks were given on sugar and some other articles. To have shared profits upon everything would not have permitted a larger dividend than 7d.



CAINSCROSS MAIN STREET.

CHAPTER VI.

A Trying Period—1865-9.

SOME REPORTS—A FEW OF THE PIONEERS—THE FIRE—PURCHASE OF SITE—NEW PREMISES—CAPITAL REQUIRED—REASONS FOR HOPE.

THE year 1865 opened with a considerable amount of local trade depression, which naturally had some influence on the spending power of the members, while it also necessitated some removals from the district. In consequence, the sales suffered to some extent. The Society, however, was quite able to hold its own, and, by the missionary spirit of one and all, the lapses and removals were fully made up by the addition of new members.

Slowly and surely the tiny seed which had been sown broadcast over the neighbourhood began to bear fruit, and the reward was a better understanding and appreciation of the efforts that were being made for the benefit of the working people.

By the experience already gained the Committee and officials had become fully alive to the advantages of Co-operative trading, and gave that untiring zeal and gratuitous service which enabled them to overcome many obstacles.

In the June, or eighth, quarterly report the Committee expressed their gratification that the Society had not gone to the wall as the prophets foretold; and they gave it as their opinion that it was firmer, better, and in a more prosperous position than it had been since its formation. Members were exhorted to be true to themselves, to make the Store their own shop, and to endeavour as much as possible by their influence to extend its operations.

The report disclosed an increase of capital, with practically nothing owing to merchants, and a dividend of 1s. 2d. in the £.

The following quarter showed an even better result. There was an increase in sales, members, and capital, and the best profit they had as yet experienced—this being sufficient to pay a dividend of 1s. 10d., with a balance left over of £21 to form a reserve fund.

The Committee was so gratified with this result that the report and balance sheet was published in the advertisement columns of the local newspapers. The Quarterly Meeting following was well attended, when congratulatory speeches were made by Mr. Webb and several other members, and the meeting was well pleased with the progress the Society was making.

It was in this year Mr. Joseph Weare first served on the Committee; and Messrs. Ed. J. Ruegg and Joseph Smith were the Auditors.

The dividend in the early days was far from being of a uniform character. Indeed, the fluctuations were somewhat wide. After the 1s. 10d. dividend in September came one of 1s. 6d. in December.

The Society progressed very satisfactorily for the next two years, gradually gaining strength and improving its position. In 1866 the sales showed a fair increase over the previous year, while the trading profits must have been very gratifying to the members generally. Those were days when great results were not expected, and a dividend of 1s. 6d. for the first two quarters of 1866 could not have been disappointing. Better things, however, were to follow, for in the next quarter there was a jump to 2s., and this was maintained for several quarters.

From the Quarterly Meeting report of February 9th, 1867, we gather that the Society had still to contend against a period of general commercial depression; it therefore spoke well for the management of the Society and its future prosperity that such good results were now being obtained.

In this year several new names appear among the Committee. These were Messrs. William Pitt, W. Shipton,

A. Vick, and S. Chapman. The three latter served but a few years. Mr. W. Pitt, however, put in a period of twenty years' service without fee of any kind. The Society is greatly indebted for the time and work that men like Mr. Pitt gave so ungrudgingly; and it is due to the efforts of such as these that the Society was able to overcome its initial difficulties, and eventually to become a strong and healthy institution. There were other long-service men who came on the Board about this time, and who may be mentioned in conjunction with Mr. Weare and Mr. Pitt. These were Mr. C. F. Jefferies (21 years) and Mr. G. Brain (20 years).

In the June quarter of this year the dividend dropped again to 1s. 6d., but in the quarter following it went up to 2s. 3d., the highest point then reached. The balance sheet also disclosed a record in the amount of business done. There was a feeling of great satisfaction at the meeting held in November, when the balance sheet for the September quarter was presented.

The share and loan capital had now reached £641. 9s. 7d., and the reserve fund £49. 9s. 9d. On the other hand, the debts owing by members had gone up to £213. 19s., which was a large amount for the number of members. The Committee, however, were not prepared to give the debtors any advantage over the cash members, so they charged interest at the rate of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent on all debts owing at the end of the quarter.

Towards the end of 1867 the Society received another very serious set-back by a disastrous fire, which resulted in the entire destruction of the premises. The fire broke out in the early hours of Sunday morning, December 1st. It appears that Mr. Shipway had closed the shop at about half-past nine on Saturday evening, and later had gone over the premises, as was his usual custom, when everything seemed to be in order. He and his family retired to rest, and about two o'clock were aroused by a strong smell of smoke, which nearly suffocated them. The Manager's bedroom adjoined the shop premises, and opened into them by a thin ledge door. On going downstairs and opening the door of the shop, the Manager

found the place in flames; and so powerful was the fire that any hope of allaying its progress was futile. The premises were constructed in the old-fashioned style, and consequently became an easy prey to the flames. The Committee-room was entered by Mr. C. F. Jefferies, the Chairman of the Committee, and the safe in which the books were deposited was found open, and these documents rescued with the exception of the minute book. It was only by the greatest promptitude that the members of Mr. Shipway's family were saved. Practically the whole of the stock was destroyed, and it was found that the insurance did not quite cover it.

The Manager lost all his furniture, but he received some recompense from a fund which was started for him, and to which the Society, members, and the public contributed a respectable sum.

With the Christmas trade approaching we can imagine what a blow it must have been to be thus burnt out of house and home. With the grit and determination previously exhibited by the Committee and officials, it was not likely they would allow this blow to overwhelm the Society. Arrangements were immediately made for temporary premises, a new stock of goods got together, and for a time the business was carried on in the coach-house of the "Golden Cross" Inn, which stood partly on the site of our present new extensions.

At best this arrangement was a very inconvenient one, but the members were prepared to accept it, and to do their best under the difficult circumstances. With such a splendid example of loyalty we cannot be surprised to find that the sales suffered but very little.

The Committee had an anxious time, and they had many meetings during December to arrange as to their future course of action, and to settle their claim with the insurance company. The property belonged to Mr. Moseley, and the Committee tried to induce him to rebuild; but his answer was, "I am an old man of eighty-five, and cannot undertake to rebuild, but I will give you men the refusal of the land reaching back to the canal, together with the ruins, for £550."

With something to put before the members, a Special Meeting was called and held on January 2nd, 1869. This meeting was largely attended, and Mr. Webb occupied the chair. Mr. Shipway gave an explanation as to the origin of the fire and the full details concerning it, to which Mr. C. F. Jefferies added his own account. The meeting came to the conclusion that no one was to blame.

Mr. Chapman, a member of the Committee, then proposed—"That we as a Co-operative Society continue to carry on the business of the Society in the most eligible manner possible." This was seconded by Mr. Blair, and carried unanimously amidst loud and continued cheering.

Mr. Moseley's offer to sell the land was then placed in the possession of the meeting, and there was a general expression of opinion that the offer was a generous one, which had been induced by Mr. Moseley's sympathy with the local Co-operative movement. The decision to purchase was made without practically any discussion.

The next step was to find the money, for the Society had no surplus funds, and even needed money to purchase new stock, or as much of it as the insurance money could not meet.

The old County of Gloucester Bank, with which the Society did business, had some confidence in the venture, for they offered, if the members could buy the land and make the stock good, to advance sufficient money to build the Store. Now the test came, and the members responded nobly. Some few left the Society, but most of them stood by the "ship," and all who could do so took up additional shares or loans, to such an extent that the decision to purchase could be carried into immediate effect.

The Society had many friends, and some who were prepared to render practical service. The Rev. J. G. Unwin lent the Cainscross Schools for meetings free of cost. Mr. S. M. Croome, solicitor (of Cainscross), conveyed the property free of charge; and Mr. John



HENRY WEBB,
Treasurer, 1863-1885.



JOSEPH SMITH,
Auditor, 1863-1882.



E. B. HOOPER,
Secretary, 1868-1877.



BENJAMIN PITT,
Treasurer, 1885-1910.

PAST OFFICERS.



E. SHIPWAY,
Manager, 1864-1884.



THOMAS LYLES,
Manager, 1884-1889.

TWO PAST MANAGERS.

Bucknall (of Dudbridge) prepared the plans and specifications, also free of cost.

The decision to buy land and build shops was a new responsibility, and something more than mere shop-keeping; but it was a step well within the ability of the Committee, in conjunction with the members, to undertake. There was a thorough Co-operative spirit in the discussions at the meetings. Mr. A. T. Lydeard was often a speaker, and his remarks were of a cautious nature. He was for placing a limit on the amount to be spent upon the building, and not to launch out too widely or prepare for too great undertakings. There were others who, perhaps, with a confidence greater than discretion, advocated a bolder policy; but a medium course was finally decided upon. A Building Committee of four was selected, and the limits of expenditure on buildings was fixed on £450. Tenders were then invited on the prepared plans and specifications. That of Mr. John Harper (of Paganhill) was accepted. The total cost when completed was £361. 9s. 8d., nearly £100 less than the Quarterly Meeting had fixed as a limit.

The new building was more capacious than the old one, and permitted of an extension in the business formerly carried on. In addition to grocery and baking, boots and shoes were now stocked, and butchers' meat supplied at the end of the week.

The balance sheet for the quarter in which the fire occurred was submitted to the ordinary Quarterly Meeting held on February 4th, 1868. It would not have been surprising if the result had been disappointing; but although there had been a considerable loss, the Committee were able to declare a dividend of 1s. 9d. in the £.

Good as this was under the circumstances, there were two dissentients to the adoption of the report. But, in the words of the meeting's minutes, their "objections and quibbles were unanimously and severely censured by all the members, and every hand upheld to oppose their evident intention of dividing and disturbing the meeting, the meeting deciding not to hear them."

These two dissentients were retiring members of the Committee, and their places were taken by Messrs. Henry Weight (of Ebley) and John Price (of Stonehouse).

The following quarter saw most of the difficulties of the business overcome. Trade had again assumed a normal condition, and the incident of the fire was proving a source of strength instead of misfortune. It had been the means of knitting the members together, and securing their whole-hearted loyalty to the Store. Furthermore, through it the Society had now become possessed of the property in which the business was carried on, and the foundations thus laid for the greater Store that was to be built in the future.

At the meeting in May a dividend of 2s. was declared, and the members were thanked for the consistent and steady support they had shown in spite of serious inconveniences to themselves. One member (Mr. S. Chapman) compared the Society with some other kindred Societies in large towns, and showed that it contrasted favourably with them. This meeting decided to open the new premises by having a *soirée*.

Money matters occupied much attention throughout the whole of 1868. The Committee and members were desirous, if possible, to secure a sufficient sum from within their own ranks, without the necessity of mortgaging the new buildings to the bank. Many meetings were held at which appeals for shares and loans were made, but the money could not be obtained in this way. The deeds had, therefore, to be deposited with the bank, and an overdraft arranged.

At the end of June, in consequence of the building operations and the prolonged absence of the Secretary, the accounts could not be prepared. A Special Meeting had therefore to be called to explain matters, and the difficulty was got over by running the two quarters together and abandoning the usual Quarterly Meeting. The September report was, therefore, a half-yearly one, and during this period the expenses from various causes were considerable, and the dividend, in consequence, dropped from 2s. to 9d. The members, however, took

it very well, and congratulated the Committee upon their success in view of the many difficulties they had had to overcome. Reference was made to the disinterested kindness of Mr. Croome, solicitor, in conveying the property; and, further, that he had used his influence with H. S. P. Winterbotham, Esq., M.P., to have the deeds duly enrolled in Chancery in order to prevent the slightest probability of dispute ever arising. Mr. Winterbotham had done this, and both had given their services gratuitously.

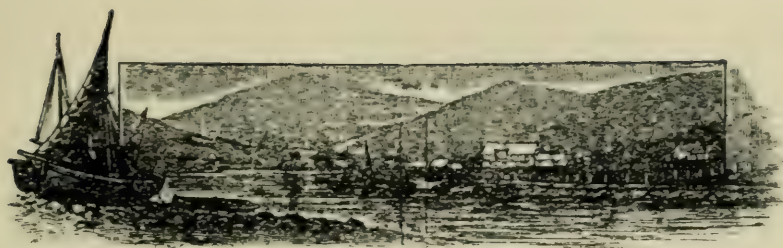
The official opening of the new shop was delayed until the early part of 1869—to be precise, February 27th—although business had been carried on for some little time previously. It was celebrated by a tea and public meeting. The new meeting-room was on the second storey, over the present Grocery and Furnishing Departments, and was called the Cainscross Lecture-room. It was capable of seating 200 people, and on this occasion every inch of space was occupied, both during and after tea. There was a miscellaneous programme, which appears to have given abundant satisfaction. Mr. Hy. Webb occupied the chair, and made a speech suitable to the occasion. He referred to the formation of the Society five years before, the vicissitudes through which it had passed, and said that he was proud of its present successful position. Mr. S. Chapman, who was now the Secretary of the new Stroud Society (having previously been on the Cainscross Committee), was the speaker of the evening, and dealt with the principles of the movement. A song, adapted for the occasion, entitled “Co-operation,” was given by Mr. Teakle, and contained, among others, the following rhymes:—

Success, success, to the Cainscross Store !
 All hail ! the opening day !
 'Tis a very good time to express in rhyme
 What hearts will beat to-day.

Here's lots of room to do a trade,
 Let members see 'tis done.
 By trade we live, and all receive
 A benefit therefrom.

The expenses in connection with the new buildings were much heavier than merely paying rent on the old shop, and for a time they had some influence on the profits. The trade, however, began to improve. In the June quarter of 1869 the dividend got up to 1s. 6d., but in the two following quarters dropped back to 1s. 4d. in the £. The balance sheet for the December quarter showed sales of £1,016, being a very fair increase. In the general statement the sum owing to the bank was £615, and owing to merchants £208. On the other hand, the buildings, land, and fixed stock as paid for were set down at £1,051, and goods in stock £588. During 1869 Mr. E. W. Ruegg (father of Judge Ruegg), Mr. Joseph Smith, and Mr. T. D. Smith were the Society's Auditors. Among the Committee were the names of Messrs. George Brain, C. F. Jefferies, W. Pitt, and S. Smart, and Mr. E. B. Hooper was Secretary.





CHAPTER VII.

Marking Time—1870-8.

HARD TIMES—COTTAGE BUILDING—FEW CHANGES—A LAND QUESTION—THE DEBT QUESTION—TO BUILD COTTAGES—TO INDUCE ATTENDANCE—BETTER PROGRESS—A RIFT—IMPORTANCE OF THE DIVIDEND—MR. HOOPER—OTHER CHANGES—A PROPOSED CONFERENCE—SOME RESULTS IN 1878.

DURING the next few years the Society's progress was steady, and if the sales did not increase much the position already gained was gradually becoming stronger. In 1870-71 the influence of the war between France and Germany was detrimental to trade conditions in this country. Work was short, and commodities of everyday consumption were dear. The spending power of the people was curtailed, and it was, therefore, something to maintain any progress, however small it might be. But if no great advance was being made in the way of trade, the members and Committee were busy in other directions.

The Society possessed a piece of land adjoining the Store which it was now thought could be brought into use for building cottages. A Special Meeting was convened by circulars in November, 1870, and, probably to make it more attractive, a tea was added as part of the programme. Some sixty members attended. Mr. H. Webb was in the chair, and Mr. C. F. Jefferies, on behalf of the Committee, unfolded two plans for cottage

building. Such schemes, however, took some time to settle in the early days when money was short and caution a virtue, and many were the ideas propounded for and against such an important undertaking. Mr. Jefferies enlarged upon the advantages that would arise from the scheme, which Mr. Bruton supported with an offer of a £20 loan. Mr. R. Beard suggested the desirability of selling the land, and clearing the overdraft from the bank. Mr. A. Lydeard, after reviewing the whole question, thought a portion of it had better be sold. Mr. Webb, however, was against any sale whatever. With this discussion the cottage building schemes then ended for the time being. Two years later, however, the question was raised again, and came to a head by the calling of a Special Meeting in July, 1873. Someone had offered to purchase the land. Again there was opposition. Mr. E. B. Hooper, who was then Secretary, said that the ownership of cottage property did not seem to come within the province of a Co-operative Society. He questioned it upon financial grounds, especially in consideration of the then high prices of labour and materials, the contingency of bad tenants, and the necessary expenses or repairs incidental thereto. He therefore thought the land had better be sold. Mr. Webb appears to have come round to this view, for he thought they ought not to burden future Committees with the care of such properties, and again the matter was adjourned.

The Committee and members cannot be accused of undue haste in coming to a decision as to the advisability of building cottages. Here was a piece of land, with a valuable frontage, lying waste, and it was a problem that awaited solution. During a period of some years the opinions of those with influence were rather on the side of a waiting policy. However, during 1874 the financial position showed a steady improvement. At the end of June the bank overdraft had entirely disappeared, and there was a bank balance of £152. 19s. The reserve fund stood at £100. 14s., while the share capital was increasing each quarter. With improved finances the

time had now come when this question might be settled, and at a meeting held on October 9th, 1874, it was decided to build four cottages on the land then vacant. This land projected several feet beyond the frontage of the Store, making the road narrower at that point. Mr. S. S. Marling, therefore, as representing the Commissioners, offered £10 to set the building back to a line uniform with adjacent property, which the Committee accepted.

The contract to build the cottages was given to Messrs. Lewis at a cost of £650, but when completed the expenditure came out at £695.

Thus the vexed question of using up the surplus land was settled, but it had taken four years to come to a definite decision.

From 1870 to 1871, with the exception of the land controversy, there were few developments, either in the Committee, Officers, or in the method of business. In 1871 the baker died; and as showing a sidelight on the labour question, a successor was appointed at 17s. per week, on the understanding that he assisted with the killing, and did anything that was required of him.

A uniform dividend of 1s. 6d. in the £ was paid from 1870 to 1874. At the end of 1872 the overdraft at the bank had been reduced to £220. The share and loan capital had gone up to £1,522, and among the assets was £657 in stock, £327 in debts, and £1,021 in land, buildings, and fixtures. The expenses of the business were at a moderate level, working out at 1s. 11d. in the £, of which wages were the greater portion.

In 1873 the amount of debts owing by the members began to occupy the serious attention of both the Committee and the Quarterly Meetings. Formerly the amount owing at the end of the quarter, in comparison with the sales, had been small. They had now, however, more than doubled in amount, and represented over £2 per member. Various suggestions were put forward in order to reduce them. At one Quarterly Meeting it was resolved that a list of members' debts be laid upon the table for the inspection of members at every Quarterly Meeting; but at first this was not effective, for there was no reduction

in the debts for many years. Another suggestion, which came from Mr. John Price, was that "all members who pay ready money have a larger dividend than those who take credit." There were, however, too many "credit" members for such a proposal to be accepted.

In March, 1875, the dividend was increased from 1s. 6d. to 1s. 8d., and the average for the year was maintained at this figure. An increase of dividend, however, did not bring an increase in the sales. There were evidences, too, that many of the members were beginning to be content with the position which the Society had reached, and made no effort to induce others to join. Quarterly Meetings were poorly attended, and occasionally had to be adjourned for want of the necessary quorum.

At the August meeting of this year a suggestion was made that, in order to make the Quarterly Meetings more interesting, and induce a better attendance, a paper should be read at each meeting, and discussion invited on a subject pertaining to the Co-operative movement. By this means it was hoped the members would enlarge their knowledge upon the various aspects of Co-operation. The Secretary promised to read the first paper, which he did at the November meeting, when a better attendance was secured. Mr. H. Webb also gave a paper at a subsequent meeting, which appears to have been greatly appreciated. He threw out valuable suggestions as to the advantages of Co-operation, showing how in social life acts of sympathy are extended one towards another, how in the benefit societies and kindred institutions the advantage of this principle was manifested. These papers fostered the social feeling which culminated in an outing of members and Committee to Cirencester Park in the following summer.

The cottages were completed at the beginning of 1876, and it was agreed that the Manager should have the first house at £11 per year rental, with the provision of coal for his own use, on the understanding that he took the Committee minutes. Mr. Shipway had the best of the bargain for several years, for at quite half of

the meetings held there was no business to transact, and of the other half the minutes of the meetings generally consisted in merely writing the dates, and giving the names of those present.

On April 20th the Store was broken into, but the loss was trifling. The culprit, however, was secured, tried, and convicted at Whitminster a few days later.

The progress during 1876 was better than in several previous years; the trade showed a satisfactory increase, and for the first time £1,100 was taken in one quarter. At the end of the year the members' share and loan capital reached £2,416. The cottages had been paid for, but there was a balance of £64 due to the bank. The Society had now £1,646 invested in property, including the trade buildings; £722 in stock, and £376 in the members' debts. The expenses of the business were kept moderately low, and the average dividend for the year was 1s. 9d.

The Quarterly Meeting of June, 1877, was enlivened by a little breeze. Evidently gossip had been busy in the village, and accusations made against certain officers of the Society by some of the members. Considerable feeling was shown, but nothing definite resulted at this meeting. The matter could not rest here however. An "indignation" meeting was subsequently called, to investigate the whole matter. After hearing the pros and cons the meeting came to the conclusion that the accusation was groundless, and, on the motion of Mr. Barrett and seconded by Mr. A. Lydeard, a vote of "entire confidence" in every officer of the Society was passed unanimously.

The Society had been now paying satisfactory dividends for some years, but the members began to think that something more than 1s. 9d. in the £ was justified. At any rate, the members desired to safeguard themselves against the possibility of a reduction; to secure this they appeared to be of opinion that all that was needed was a resolution to that effect. Thus in February, 1877, a resolution was passed that "the dividend does not go below 1s. 9d. while the reserve fund is over £100." In the quarter following, as the profits earned did not admit of such a dividend being

paid, a sum of £10 was taken from the reserve fund for that purpose. This action would appear to have had some bearing on future quarters, for the dividend gradually went up. It can only be surmised that the increase of dividend was made by an advance in the price of goods, for the total expenses of working were not any less, and the sales for the next two years did not show any increase.

At the end of September, 1877, the bank overdraft had again been cleared off, and a balance left to the Society's credit of £134. 13s. 2d. The sales for this quarter were £1,237, and the profits £127. 18s. 1d., which admitted of a dividend of 2s. in the £, with a fair balance to the reserve fund, bringing this up to £123. 1s. 10d. When the Quarterly Meeting was held in November to present the report and balance sheet for the quarter, the Secretary was away, and the Committee had to explain that, owing to Mr. Hooper's unavoidable absence from duty through a fire at his premises, the balance sheet was not completed. On the motion of Mr. G. Brooks the meeting was postponed for a fortnight.

The delay in getting out the balance sheet, and the postponement of the meeting, was a cause of worry to Mr. Hooper, and when the adjourned meeting took place a fortnight later the announcement was made that Mr. Hooper had resigned. A vote of thanks was given him for his services, certainly a poor recompense for ten years' work, which had been done without remuneration of any sort. Such gratuitous service speaks volumes for the interest Mr. Hooper had in the cause of Co-operation, and for the movement in Cainscross and Ebley particularly. He came to the Society just before the fire, and during his first two years of office must have given much time and thought to his duties. His balance sheets were clear, properly drawn up, and gave a true index to the Society's position. The thanks of present-day Co-operators are due to him and other workers for their self-sacrifice and devotion in the early days.

Mr. Thos. Smith, who became Auditor in 1870, gave up the duties of his office in this year; he also received

the thanks of the members for his seven years' gratuitous services. Mr. John Jacob was appointed Auditor in his place.

In the report presented to the February meeting, 1878, a dividend of 2s. in the £ was again declared, and the bank balance was £183. 3s. 11d. The total profit was £119. 18s.

At this meeting several resignations took place. There appears to have been a desire for a change of Committee, and Messrs. Smart and Brain expressed a decided willingness to give way to new men. The former declined to seek re-election; and Mr. C. F. Jefferies, who had been Chairman of the Committee for ten years and two years as Committee-man, resigned for other reasons. Mr. Jefferies briefly reviewed the history of the Society during the many years of his association with it.

The Secretaryship was offered to Mr. John Jacob, which he accepted, and Mr. E. B. Hooper was elected as Auditor in place of Mr. Jacob. Mr. G. Brain now became Chairman of the Committee. Messrs. R. Beard and Jacob Burford were the new members of the Committee.

In December, 1878, an application was received by the Committee from the Gloucester Society's Committee, asking for assistance in respect to a proposed Co-operative Conference to be held at Stroud in January. The friends at Gloucester could not understand an industrial centre like Stroud being without a Co-operative Society. The Committee did not look upon this proposal with a favourable eye, having regard to the previous efforts to found a Society there. An answer was returned to the effect "that while the Committee were willing and prepared to further the principles of Co-operation at all times, they were of opinion that just now such meetings at Stroud would do no good." The meeting was barren of results, which is scarcely to be wondered at.

The trade of 1878 showed a decrease of £62 in comparison with the previous year; but otherwise the financial position was stronger. Capital continued to increase, and showed itself in an increased bank balance. The

dividend in the December quarter was again 2s. in the £, and the reserve fund increased to £139. 14s. 3d.

At the Annual Meeting in February, 1879, the progress of the past year was discussed, and the results cannot be said to have satisfied all the members. At this meeting Mr. W. Clissold warmly advocated the introduction of "young blood" on the Committee. Against this Mr. R. Beard, who was Chairman of the meeting, argued strongly for the retention of old and experienced men as most likely to advance the best interests of the Society. In this he was supported by Mr. Jacob and Mr. Shipway. One member suggested that a new Committee should be elected every quarter, but the meeting as a whole seemed to be against making any change. During this period the increasing bank balance was beginning to exercise the minds of the Committee and members. At a Special Meeting of members held in this month a proposal was carried which empowered the Committee to request the non-dealing members to withdraw their money, and to give notice that no interest would be paid upon money invested unless supported by the trade of the person investing.



AVENING CHURCH.

CHAPTER VIII.

Better Times in Store—1879-83.

HIGHER DIVIDENDS—A NEW PURCHASE—CO-OPERATIVE WHOLE-SALE SOCIETY—INCOME TAX—CHANGE OF COMMITTEE—CHAIRMAN RESIGNS—A QUESTION OF FINANCE—A THREE-SHILLING DIVIDEND — BUILDING SCHEME — CHANGE OF AUDITORS — SOME DONATIONS — THE ONLY HORSE — THE NEW STROUD SOCIETY—COMING OF AGE—"GOLDEN CROSS" PURCHASED.

UP to this time, although steadily progressing, the Society had not moved with the rapidity which characterised the next few years. The period of inaction and extreme caution, which appeared to have been ever present when dealing with the Society's affairs, seems now to have passed away. By steady success the Store was living down the doubts and fears which kept so many from joining it. The foundations having been truly laid, the future was opening brightly, and was eventually to lead on to the great and prosperous Society which we have to-day.

The year 1879 was marked by the payment of higher dividends. For the March quarter the dividend was 2s. 3d. in the £, and checks were now given upon every purchase, which formerly had not been the case. But curiously enough, the quarter after this jump in the dividends the sales declined to the extent of £28. In the September and December quarters the dividend increased to 2s. 6d. in the £, and, as there was a surplus of profit even then, it is evident that more could have been declared. Another good feature in this year was the reduction in the members' debts; these had gone down to the extent of quite one-third in amount. The

share and loan capital at the end of 1879 stood at £2,578, and the reserve fund at £158. There was a fair increase in the sales during the December quarter, but this was accounted for by the advance in the price of bread, which went up to 7½d. per quartern. The rise of the dividend at this period may be partly attributed to the fact that the Society had a good supply of flour purchased before the rise. Such prosperity brought forward many suggestions, mainly in the direction of giving increased benefits to the members. It was probably overlooked that exceptional circumstances are but fleeting in their duration. At the Annual Meeting in February, 1880, one of the Auditors suggested the formation of a bonus account in the nature of an insurance fund, which would permit of a bonus being paid to each member upon withdrawal, or to their executors in case of death. Such amounts were to vary in proportion to duration of membership. This was approved by the meeting, and the matter left to the Committee to work out in detail, who, it is presumed, found the idea at that time more idealistic than practical, for it was never adopted. The March quarter of 1880 saw a further rise in the dividend; this time to 3s. in the £. But in the June quarter there was a drop to 2s. 3d. Such fluctuations in the dividend are always unsatisfactory; increases are welcomed, but when they go down again criticism and dissatisfaction invariably follow. It was so at this time.

Hitherto the Society's business had been confined to grocery, bakery, boots, and butchering, but on May 24th, 1880, the first step towards a new department was made, the Manager being empowered to purchase some samples of hosiery. At the Committee meeting a week later the evening was spent principally in the inspection of the hosiery thus purchased. From this humble beginning the Drapery Department at Cainscross sprang into existence.

The Co-operative Wholesale Society in Manchester was proving a great success, and already a number of Branches and Depôts had been opened. The London Branch had been opened in 1874, but, on account of the

distance, was not as yet of much real benefit to the West of England Co-operative Societies. However, in July, 1880, the Committee agreed to join this Society and take up twenty shares of £5 each, fully paid. This was one share for every ten members, the number of members being about two hundred. By the rules of the C.W.S. Societies now have to take up four £5 shares for every twenty members. In 1884 the Wholesale Society opened a *Depôt* in Bristol, and from that time an increasing trade has been done. One advantage of this wholesale institution is that through its operations the producer and consumer are brought into more immediate contact, and all intermediate profits are thereby saved. It has accomplished this by entering largely into the field of production, and also by tapping the first markets for the world's produce. The influence of this great Wholesale Society has helped considerably to foster Co-operation, especially in giving strength to Societies when help has been needed.

In 1880 the Committee had some trouble, as the Society was being assessed for purposes of Income Tax, and Mr. John Jacob (the Secretary) conducted a long correspondence on the question. An appeal was made to the Co-operative Union for assistance, which was readily forthcoming. It is sometimes thought that Co-operative Societies are favoured in that they are not like public companies and individual traders assessed for Income Tax, but this is not so. People are not liable to Income Tax unless their incomes exceed £160 a year. The incomes of 95 per cent of the members of Co-operative Societies would not come to anything like that sum. The percentage in public companies would probably be in inverse ratio, and the assessment for Income Tax purposes is made at this source merely for the convenience of the authorities. If, therefore, the Revenue Authorities were to collect the tax on the profits made by the Societies in their corporate capacity there would be a busy time in settling the claims for exemption from individual members, and the Revenue people would even lose in the end. The work of claiming exemptions, however, would mean

much annoyance to the Societies, and arrangements have therefore been made exempting Societies from assessment for Income Tax, thus saving worry and expenses on both sides. The real fight on this question was by the Co-operative Union on behalf of all the Societies, and from which each benefits.

The report put before the February meeting of 1881 revealed a fair amount of progress during 1880. The share and loan capital had gone up to £2,641 and the reserve fund to £163, while among the assets the amount in the trade premises and cottages stood at £1,537, and £100 in the shares of the C.W.S. The bank balance was £432. 17s. 6d., but one important change had occurred in the members' debts. Three years previously these had stood at £382, and now, on an increased turnover, they had gone down to £82. The steps taken by the Committee and members had borne excellent fruit, and probably the course adopted of exhibiting the list of debts on the table at the Quarterly Meeting was after all the most effective. The dividend had got back to 2s. 3d. again. On the management there were more changes than usual at this meeting. Messrs. J. Burford, George Pearce, and J. Lusty went into retirement. Those taking their places were: Mr. Joseph Weare, who had previously served on the Committee, and Messrs. George Brooks and H. Winfield. Mr. J. Lusty had only served two years, and took the place of Mr. Adolphus Smith, who had served seven years (1870-1877). Mr. A. Smith was the father of Mr. Ed. Smith, the present representative for Stonehouse on the Committee. Mr. J. Jacob, who had held the Secretaryship for four years, sent a letter to the Chairman early in March, 1881, resigning his position owing to ill-health. Mr. Jacob had carried out his duties most satisfactorily, and received the thanks of the members. Mr. D. J. Close, who was employed at the Stanley Mills, undertook the duties vacated by Mr. Jacob. At one of the Committee meetings in this year a discussion ensued respecting the secrecy of Committee proceedings, those of past meetings having been disclosed to outsiders. The Chairman hereupon impressed upon all the Committee-men the absolute



GENERAL COMMITTEE AND OFFICIALS.

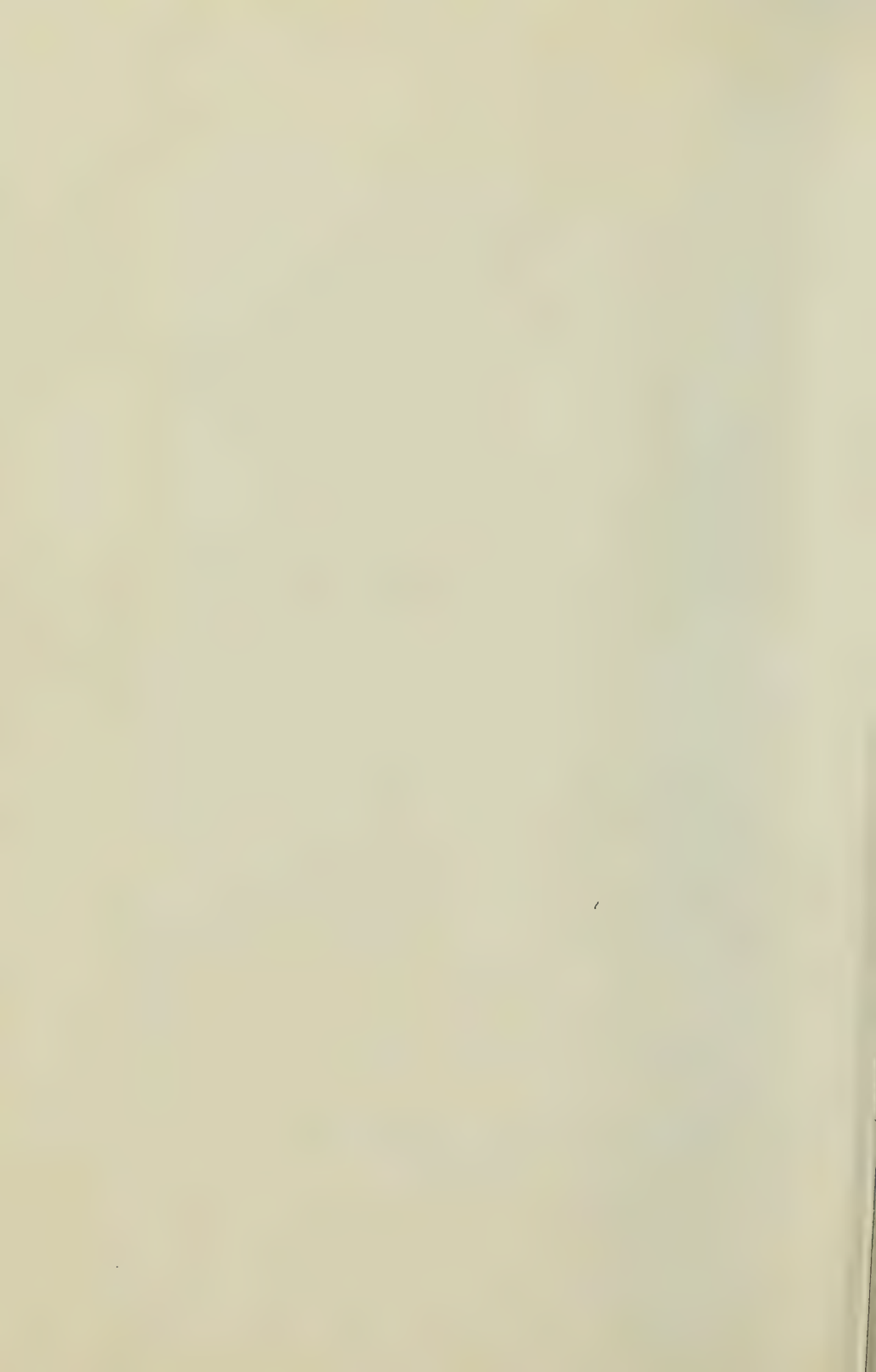
Top Row: J. Bennett, B. S. Hill, F. Randall, D. May, A. Barrett.

Middle Row: G. Dauncey (Treasurer), B. Hudson (General Manager), T. Miles (President), F. W. Beck (Secretary), Ed. Smith.

Bottom Row: A. J. Hoskins, E. T. Warner.



TIMOTHY MILES,
COMMITTEE, 1893-1900 ;
PRESIDENT, 1900-1913.



necessity of every item of business being kept entirely within the limits of the Committee-room. Evidently the admonition was sufficient, for there does not appear to have been any later reference on this matter.

Mr. Brain resigned his position at a Committee meeting on May 24th, but upon being pressed to reconsider his decision, consented to do so.

The bank balance at this time exceeded £500, which was a large amount in comparison to the amount of business done. Having regard to the unremunerative nature of this surplus, Mr. Brooks urged that the principle which permitted this large balance to exist, and at the same time the payment of interest on borrowed capital, was not a sound one. He said that lenders should first be compelled to accept payment of their loans before members were asked to withdraw their share capital. At the same time he would much prefer that some use could be made of the surplus capital. There were older Committeemen, however, who remembered the earlier days, and contended that as these loans were contracted at a time when the Society was in difficulties and the investment risky, these same loans should in consequence be treated, in a sense, as "perpetual." The outcome of this discussion was a proposition for increased shop accommodation, and Mr. Clissold, a local architect, was called upon to prepare a scheme to improve the frontage, and add a new wing to the premises.

In December, 1881, after a lapse of sixteen years, the Committee issued a report with the balance sheet. In this they congratulated the members upon the continued prosperity of the Society, and trusted, with the increased facilities, still greater results might be obtained. Prosperity was certainly coming to the Society in a larger measure than had previously been the case. There was money in abundance, even more than the Committee could at that time employ. A dividend of 3s. in the £ was declared for this quarter, with a fair amount set aside for depreciation. The balance at the bank had gone up to £665, and the debts down to £63. 1s. 6d. It would have been an excellent opportunity to adopt the ready-money

system, for at this time the bulk of the members must have been dealing upon this principle. The share and loan capital was £2,780, an average of over £13 per member, although every encouragement was given for members to withdraw their capital.

At the Annual Meeting held early in 1882 a scheme for enlarging the premises was brought before the members. The Chairman explained the nature and objects of the alterations. He said the necessary funds were in hand, and the members unanimously approved. The work of building was given to Mr. J. Lewis, at a cost of £304. The alterations consisted of improvements to the roof of the building and the windows on the second floor, in adding the cornices and imitation stone work in concrete to the frontage, and erecting another portion to the building—that part recently occupied by the cash office—with the room above.

This new wing when completed was occupied as a small Drapery Department; but only such goods as were needed for everyday use, such as calicoes, flannels, hosiery, and haberdashery were stocked. The goods were served in conjunction with the grocery, and by the grocery salesmen, as were also the boots, which were stocked in a room at the rear of the present Grocery Department.

When these alterations were completed the trade became more general in character. Added to that of grocery, boots, butchering, and bread, there was now drapery and ironmongery.

After the audit of the March balance sheet of 1882, Mr. Joseph Smith and Mr. E. B. Hooper resigned their positions as Auditors. Mr. Smith was now getting on in years, and felt that he should pass on his duties to a younger man. He was one of that band of earnest men who helped to start the Society, and became its first Auditor. His services, like those of all the early officials, were gratuitous; nevertheless, they were rendered with a willing hand and heart. His term of service extended over nineteen years. Messrs. W. H. Close and William Randall were appointed Auditors in their place, at a salary of £1 each per annum.

With better finances worthy objects were not forgotten, and several donations were given from the funds during 1882: £1. 10s. was voted to the Co-operative Congress; £1 to the Sawston Society, which was appealing for help; £1 in response to an appeal made by the Co-operative Congress on behalf of Mr. E. T. Craig, who had been a friend to Co-operation; and £5 for the proposed memorial to T. Hughes, Esq., Q.C., in recognition of the services he had rendered to the movement.

The Committee resolved in July of this year to take up twenty shares in the Co-operative Insurance Society, and also, in a corporate capacity, to become agents for that Society. This was the only Co-operative Insurance Society, and in subsequent years was of much service to Co-operative Societies in the business it undertook.

The nature and extent of the business at this period permitted the employment of one horse. It cannot, however, be said that the animal was unduly overworked in the delivery of about 700 quarterns of bread weekly, and goods to less than 200 people who resided within a short distance of the Store. Perhaps that explained the low value that was set upon the one horse required, and the length of time it was employable. There was a long discussion in Committee in November, 1882, on this horse question, the ultimate result of which was to purchase a new horse for £20. Any of the Committee hearing of one for sale was to send the vendor to the Manager. The terms were to be—a month on trial. When the purchase was completed it was resolved to have the old horse shot; its work was, therefore, evidently finished.

The second Stroud Society was started during this year, under the sponsorship of the Gloucester Society. In this work that ardent apostle of Co-operation, Mr. Joseph Clay, took a leading part. There was the usual struggle during the first year, but eventually the question of failure was left behind, and a strong Society arose, which is now in every way worthy of the town that bears its name. As a neighbouring Society Cainscross Co-operators can, and indeed do, rejoice in its success.

Towards the end of 1882 two of the Stroud Committeemen came down to inquire if bread could be supplied them from Cainscross for a time. In reply they were told that sixty or seventy quarterns could be sent them weekly at 5½d. per quartern cash. But the Cainscross Committee would prefer that they should supply themselves in Stroud. It does seem that this reply was scarcely sympathetic, but it is very probable that the Committee entertained some doubts of the Stroud Society becoming a success.

The December quarter of 1882 showed a decided upward tendency, and a greater increase in trade than had been so far recorded. Dealing with the returns of the year it was now possible to make interesting comparisons, and quote figures which the Co-operators of that day must have heard with commendable pride.

The Society had now been established close upon twenty years. At the time of the fire in 1867 there were 148 members in the Society. Since then 295 had joined against 232 who had withdrawn, making the membership 211. During the fifteen years they had depreciated property to the extent of £338, and paid in dividends £4,856, also the sum of £334 in interest on capital. The sales for 1882 were £4,654, and the average dividend for the year was 2s. 8d. in the £.

At the Annual Meeting in February, 1883, it was decided to have "coming-of-age celebrations," evidently reckoning the period at twenty years instead of the usual twenty-one. The members resolved to commemorate the event by a tea meeting to be held in the Stroud Subscription Rooms. Sir S. Marling was asked to take the chair, and Messrs. H. R. Brand, M.P., W. Stanton, T. Hughes, Q.C., H. F. A. Davis, and J. Clay, and others were invited as speakers. Some of the gentlemen, however, could not be present.

The event was a great success, and the rooms were crowded. Sir S. Marling showed his sympathy with the movement and interest in the Society by presiding at the meeting. In his remarks he said he was satisfied that institutions like this would be of incalculable value in

teaching those habits of frugality in early life and in every stage of life which were so important an essential to every man who intended to make any progress. It had been a privilege to him for years past to witness a modest Society of that kind managed by men of integrity and ability. They began with small means, and used those aright, diffusing comfort and happiness around them, and, above all, showing what might be done by unison, thrift, and frugality. He had no doubt that institutions of this kind were doing an immense amount of good, and he wished all honour to the Cainscross and Ebley Society.

Mr. H. F. A. Davis (a solicitor) also addressed the meeting at some length, and extended his congratulations to the Society on its success. Mr. Davis was an authority on the law relating to Co-operative and Friendly Societies, and wrote a book on the work of these institutions.

Other speakers at this meeting were Mr. J. Clay and Mr. R. Warne, representing the Gloucester Society, and Mr. W. H. Cornish, representing the new Stroud Society.

At the close of the meeting Sir S. Marling remarked that the basis of success in these Co-operative Societies was that which enabled a man to succeed in anything. It was a thing he had found himself. He was not born a rich man, but his father and mother gave him a good education, and he had been educating himself ever since. Providence was always with the man who helped himself, and such was the principle upon which the success of these Co-operative Societies was based.

In November, 1883, Mr. H. Webb recommended one of his scholars—Walter Bennett—as an apprentice for a term of five years, to commence at 1s. per week. He was taken a month on trial on November 24th, 1883, and has remained in the Society's service ever since, and is now the Manager of the Stonehouse, or No. 1, Branch.

The property known as the "Golden Cross," which occupied the site of the present Drapery Department and offices, was purchased in this year for £550. It was an ancient inn, the licence of which a few years previously had been cancelled under an arrangement. At one time

it was a noted rendezvous for prominent Cainscross residents, and believed to be the oldest inn in the village. When making some alterations a few years ago, and taking down the fireplace in the bar, a crown piece dated 1695 was found in a state of perfect preservation.

The year 1883 showed further progress; the membership had increased by forty-seven on the year, bringing it up to 258. The share and loan capital was £3,550, and although property had been purchased, together with an advance on mortgages and other investments, to the extent of £775 during the year, there was still a sum at the bank much beyond what was required for the business. A dividend of 3s. was declared for the December quarter.





CHAPTER IX.

The Policy of Branch Stores and Bakeries.

THE FIRST BRANCH—EFFECT OF OPENING BRANCHES—MESSAGE FROM WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE—THE FIRST SEED AT DURSLEY—NO. 2 BRANCH OPENED—THE FIRST BAKERY—NO. 3 BRANCH—STONEHOUSE BAKERY—WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE BRANCH OPENED—NO. 5 BRANCH AT KING STANLEY—NAILSWORTH BAKERY.

“CO-OPERATION knows no frontier” is a truism that has been well exemplified by the spread of the movement in our own country and then across the seas to other lands. Some of the earlier and more important Societies were not long in perceiving the need for Branch Stores, while others with a feeling of timidity were afraid to embark upon a policy of expansion. In the early eighties the Committee had the question of Branches several times brought before their notice. The first occasion was through a request from Stroud to open a Branch there, but the undertaking was deemed too risky. Again, at the end of 1884 a letter was received from Mr. Joseph Clay (of Gloucester Society), asking the Committee to seriously consider the question of opening Branches; but the time was not yet. Branches, however, were bound to come, and though the Committee were reluctant to move in the matter, there remained the alternative of action by the members through the Quarterly Meeting. Customers were coming in from

other villages, and the question soon arose as to the necessity of meeting the requirements of these people near their own homes.

The credit of the first real step towards the opening of Branches is due to a Stonehouse member. At the February meeting of 1886 a resolution was put forward in the natural way, without notice or warning, "that a Branch Store be opened at Stonehouse." This was accepted. There was, of course, a considerable amount of discussion, for a step of this magnitude could not be taken without weighing up the pros and cons, and those in favour were not all on one side. The decision taken, however, the Committee were forthwith empowered to carry out the necessary steps for the opening of this the first Branch. For twenty-three years Cainscross had been merely a "one-store" Society, but now the policy of isolation was to be abandoned and that of expansion adopted. Events have proved that the policy of opening Branches has been the making of the Society, and from an economical point of view has been an advantage to the whole present-day membership. But for the adoption of this policy it is very probable that eventually there would have been a number of separate Societies in the district within our present area of operations, and, instead of one strong Society, it is more than likely we should have had a number of small ones struggling and competing with each other. As it is, Cainscross and Ebley, although but villages, can take the credit of having sent forth the spirit of Co-operation over the whole mid-division of Gloucestershire.

From 1886 the real commencement of the Society's progress may be reckoned. Branch after Branch followed, each successful, and they have influenced the trade and membership of the old Central Store as nothing else had done before. The success of one brought success all round, until to-day Cainscross may be likened to a mother country having the possession of prosperous colonies, bound together by common aims and a common object, and united by sympathy, ties of brotherhood, and mutual help.

It pays to give a helping hand to eager, earnest youth,
To note, with all their waywardness, their courage and their
truth;
To strive with sympathy and love their confidence to win;
It pays to open wide the heart, and "let the sunshine in."

After the decision was made to open a Branch immediate steps were taken to procure premises suitable for the purpose. It happened that Mr. T. C. Huntley had a shop vacant at the top of Regent Street, and this was taken upon a lease of five years at a rental of £15 per annum. The position was a good one, but the premises were hardly ideal. Still it was a new venture, and there was the advantage of a low rent with immediate possession. No time was lost in stocking the shop with grocery, ready for the opening, which had been fixed for March 22nd. Some large bills were posted in the district announcing the date of opening, together with the necessary particulars as to how to join the Society and the benefits that would accrue through membership. On the appointed day the shop was opened for business, without ceremony of any kind, and Mr. O. J. Pearce was appointed the Branch Manager. One member of the Committee did not believe in the policy of Branch Stores, and therefore resigned his seat; but, as befitting the occasion, a representative for Stonehouse, in the person of Mr. John Kendall, was elected to the vacancy. The Branch was a success from the start, and in the June report sales of £516. 8s. 7d. for the quarter were recorded. But, what was also remarkable, the Central showed its largest increase, in spite of the fact that there had been some trade transferred to Stonehouse. The September report showed a further advance. In this quarter the Stonehouse sales recorded were £643. 4s.

The time seemed now ripe for Branches in other villages; at least that was the opinion of many people who were not yet within the radius of the Society's operations. The idea of Branches was talked about in many a working-class home, particularly in those districts where Co-operation had previously been known. The old independent Store at Wotton had now been closed

for eight years, and there were many people who still remembered the advantages which that Store had given them, so that one can easily understand a fresh desire on their part to have a Co-operative Store in their midst. As an outcome of this feeling a petition was got up, numerously signed, and sent to the Cainscross Committee in October, 1887, asking for a Branch Store to be opened there. This the Committee duly considered, but the answer was in the negative, the reason given being that it was too far from Cainscross. Certainly this at the time was a cogent reason, but which later, through the developments intervening at Dursley, lost its force. At the Annual Meeting in February, 1891, Mr. John Kendall did not seek re-election, having recently removed to Cam, a fact which a little later had some influence in hastening the Dursley Branch, which was even now being discussed. Mr. Kendall had served five years on the Committee, and Mr. Beaver was elected as his successor to represent Stonehouse.

A MESSAGE FROM CAM.

A letter was shortly after received from Mr. Kendall, in reference to a meeting he had organised at Cam with the idea of opening a Branch in that district. A deputation was sent, consisting of Messrs. Ford, Beaver, and the Manager, as representative of the Society. Their report was in favour of a Branch being opened if a sufficient number of additional members could be obtained. The first step, however, leading to the future Dursley Branch—or, it might be said, the first seed sown—occurred in 1888, and was through a Stonehouse member (Mr. H. T. Tocknell) removing to Cam. Mr. Tocknell had been a member sufficiently long to make him desirous of continuing his membership. The difficulty as to distance was got over by the Branch Manager arranging for the goods to be sent by train, an agreement being made on the question of carriage. The one member at Cam led to another, until there were some eight or ten. Goods were sent by train in a large basket specially made for the purpose, and the three

oldest members (Messrs. H. Tocknell, W. Powell, and J. Alder) distributed the parcels to the members. This was a little self-sacrifice that paved the way to greater things. Soon afterwards it was arranged to send a cart once a week. This brought more members, until a cart was sent three days a week. Then the members were also supplied with bread.

The Committee now arranged a public meeting to be held in Dursley for the purpose of ascertaining the opinion of the inhabitants of the district respecting the opening of a Branch. This was held on March 21st, 1891. Mr. R. A. Lister (now Sir Ashton) presided. There were present several representatives from the Gloucester Society, besides members of our Committee, Secretary, and Manager. Mr. Lister, in his remarks, spoke as a Co-operator, and gave as a reason for taking the chair that the Civil Service had taken advantage of Co-operation, and why not the working man. What was good for the rich was ten times better for the poor, and he wanted to see the working men of that district have as good a chance as the working men of other districts. Mr. Jos. Weare then moved a resolution, "that this meeting of working men, believing that a Co-operative Store is much needed in Dursley, do hereby cordially invite the Cainscross and Ebley Society to start a Branch for Dursley and district in the town of Dursley." Mr. Knight (of Gloucester) seconded this in a very able speech. Other speakers included Mr. Brooks, Mr. Warner, and two or three local enthusiasts. There were about three hundred present, and a sufficient guarantee was given as to warrant the Committee in proceeding.

At the Quarterly Meeting held in May, 1891, a strong contingent was present from Dursley, when the Chairman submitted a recommendation that a Branch be opened. The proposal was moved by Mr. J. Kendall, and seconded by Mr. Vaisey, both of whom were residents in Cam. A considerable amount of discussion followed, and some of the members were altogether adverse to the proposal of opening a Branch so far away. It is even probable that the matter might at least have been deferred, but

for the presence of the Dursley contingent, who pleaded very earnestly in favour of a Branch, and the Committee's recommendation was carried.

Inquiries were made for suitable premises, and a shop was secured in Long Street, from Mr. J. B. Champion. This was taken upon a lease of seven years, with the option of renewal.

The opening took place on September 12th, with Mr. A. Clutterbuck as the first Manager. Mr. Brooks performed the opening ceremony. A meeting followed in the Victoria Rooms, where speeches were given by Messrs. Clay and Warne, representing Gloucester, and other friends. The meeting was a success, and gave a good start to the opening of the Store.

When the Branch had been opened three months there was an average trade of £40 per week. And as showing the keen interest in the affair the local members had already obtained the appointment of a Sub-Committee to watch over the particular interests of Dursley. This Committee, however, did not answer in the sense it was expected, as it had no real power, and could do nothing but make suggestions, which could not always be carried out.

FURTHER EXTENSIONS.

Three years later, in 1895, there was a further extension in the policy of outside development. The two Branches already established were increasing in trade, and the provision in the way of premises was becoming inadequate for the requirements of the business. Since the opening of the Dursley Branch the customers in that district had been supplied with bread from the Cainscross Bakery. But, as more oven space was required, it was deemed more economical to have a bakery at Dursley. By this means the time saved in sending the bread from Cainscross could be utilised in bringing a wider area within the purview of the local Store. Sanction was therefore sought and obtained at the Annual Meeting of 1895, and the necessary work put in hand without delay. On April 27th the first Branch Bakery was opened with the usual tea and public meeting to mark the event. And

within a few weeks there was a satisfactory increase in the local bread sales.

With the extensions of the Society's area the bread cart has ever proved a good missionary to the cause. The name painted on its sides has been read over and over again by the people. Some have passed it by unheedingly and unthinkingly, while to others it has brought the message of Co-operation. Thus the Society has gained new members as farther and farther it has gone through the valleys and over the hills.

Such was the case in the Nailsworth district until, in 1895, the necessity arose for establishing a Branch Store there. Premises were secured in Bath Road, at a rental of £30 per annum. The Branch was opened on July 26th of that year, with a good nucleus of members. Thus the movement was again brought into one of the oldest Co-operative districts in Gloucestershire. The Store was not opened without some opposition on the part of the tradespeople. It was said by some that the shop would soon have to close again, as that of the old local Society had done. On this occasion, however, there was a strong parent behind, and once opened, so long as there was a population in Nailsworth, there the Co-operative shop would remain.

The Branch was opened quietly, and without even the usual public meeting. About three years previously two Co-operative meetings had been attempted in the town. At the first only about three people turned up, and the meeting was abandoned. On the second occasion the people on the platform were in the majority, and only a part of the programme was gone through. With such an experience a meeting was deemed unnecessary, and the opening was merely announced by leaflet. Yet, in the way of trade, the opening success was greater than either Stonehouse or Dursley had been. Mr. E. Ward was the first Manager of the Branch.

It was not long before the new Branch had a respectable weekly turnover, but the addition of so many new members added a great strain on the baking capacity at Cainscross.

To relieve this pressure it was deemed advisable to open a Branch Bakery at Stonehouse. There was already a bakehouse on the premises, which had formerly been used by Mr. H. G. Ford when he owned the property, and very little alteration was needed to put the ovens in repair and make the bakehouse suitable for the Society's requirements. The necessary alterations were therefore made, and baking commenced there at the end of July, 1896.

The policy of opening Branch Bakeries has been the only feasible one, having regard to the extent of the Society's operations. There may be advantages in having one large central bakery; but here, with a district extending over twenty miles in a straight line, such a scheme would have been extremely costly in bread delivery; and, furthermore, the outer districts would not have developed in the way which they have.

Another alteration took place at Stonehouse in the second half of this year. Since the premises were taken over the Drapery Department had occupied a room at the rear of the Grocery. A shop adjoining, in the occupation of Mr. F. Mayo, came into the Society's possession, and after necessary alterations had been made the Drapery and Boots were transferred there.

WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE.

Just as Stonehouse Branch led in a way to the possibility of a Dursley Branch, so did the latter make possible a Branch at Wotton. The news of the Society's success at Dursley reached the neighbouring town, and inquiry was again made as to the possibility of extending the benefits of Co-operation to Wotton. This inquiry led to a public meeting in the Town Hall in May, 1896. The meeting was well attended, and the Chairman, Mr. Weare, made a few remarks as to the reason of the meeting being called. Messrs. R. Warner, W. Collins, and T. Miles made speeches explaining the movement, in which they also gave particulars concerning the Society.

It was pointed out that, with the recent erection of ovens at Dursley, the Society had the capacity for turning

out a considerably larger quantity of bread; and, if the people of Wotton were inclined towards Co-operation, they could be served from the Dursley Branch. After the meeting came a requisition, signed by forty people, asking for a regular delivery to Wotton.

In August the cart commenced to run once a fortnight, by September it was going twice a week, and shortly after three times a week; but even this arrangement did not meet the requirements of the Wotton people. In October they held a meeting among themselves, as a result of which the Committee was petitioned either to open a Branch at Wotton, or render assistance to members there to start an independent Store. There were already thirty-eight members in Wotton and Kingswood, and many more were expected to join if premises were taken. The Committee considered there was a fair prospect of success, and accordingly they submitted a proposal to open a Branch to the November Quarterly Meeting, and it was unanimously adopted. Premises were secured from Mr. Armitage, and in a very short time fitted out and made ready for business.

The opening took place on December 18th with a "flourish of trumpets," and in the presence of a large crowd. A tea followed, at which over 300 sat down, and afterwards a crowded meeting was held in the Town Hall. Mr. R. H. Tutt, a notable leader in the Co-operative world, was the principal speaker. His remarks gave such an inspiration to the crowded audience that the success of the new Branch was at once assured. Mr. Charles Davis was appointed to take charge of the Branch.

For another year the bread requirements of the new Branch had to be supplied from the Dursley Bakery, when it became necessary to carry the policy of Branch Bakeries a step further by opening a bakery in Wotton, which was carried into effect in March, 1899.

KING STANLEY BRANCH.

The last of the Branch Stores to be opened was that of King Stanley; and this was brought about by the

sending in of a requisition to the Committee, signed by seventy-seven members, asking for a Branch Store to be opened in that village. The Committee were favourable to this, and recommended the proposal to the Quarterly Meeting of May, 1901. That body, however, did not receive the proposal in a very enthusiastic spirit, and deferred the matter for three months. At the August meeting following the Chairman was able to announce that over thirty promises to become members had been received, which, together with the existing members, would be sufficient to warrant the opening of a Branch. Mr. Kempton considered that King Stanley had done wonderfully well in enrolling so many members, considering the inconvenience to them, and that they had shown a strong desire for Co-operation. It was not surprising, therefore, that the proposal to open the Branch received unanimous support. The opening took place on November 2nd, and to Mr. Miles was entrusted the duty of turning the key. The premises were formerly the Salvation Army Barracks, and were purchased for £150. With very little alteration they made admirable business premises.

The event was marked by the holding of a tea and meeting. Mr. Miles presided, and he reminded his audience that they had come to Stanley as the apostles of Co-operation; to preach its benefits, and to make known what it would accomplish. Mr. R. H. Tutt was the chief speaker. And in one part of his speech he referred to the young people becoming identified with the movement. He thought it would be a good plan if parents would let their children know all that was to be learnt about Co-operation. Impressions imparted to the young would remain on their minds in after life, to the lasting benefit of the movement. Mr. A. E. Park was appointed the first Branch Manager.

With a progressive business there would appear to be almost a continuous need for extension of premises; but for a few years there was now a lull in this direction. In the meantime, however, the bakery at Cainscross, which was supplying the members of the Central and the



NO. 1 BRANCH, STONEHOUSE
(GROCERY AND DRAPERY).



NO. 3 BRANCH, NAILSWORTH.



ONE OF THE SOCIETY'S BREAD VANS.



NO. 2 BRANCH BAKERY, DURSLEY.

two Branches at Nailsworth and King Stanley, had greater calls upon its baking capacity, and it was only a question of time when further accommodation would have to be provided. Such necessity for this came to a head in 1895. The Cainscross Bakery had been enlarged several times, and did not permit of further extensions. The alternative, therefore, was the erection of a Branch Bakery at Nailsworth. Some three cottages, with a piece of garden ground, at Tanner's Piece, were purchased in 1904; and on the ground in question it was resolved to erect a bakery suitable for the local needs. The buildings, when completed, comprised a bakehouse, stables, and bread-house. The architect was Mr. Worcester, of the Architects' Department of the Co-operative Wholesale Society. The builder was Mr. E. W. Baldwin (of Nailsworth), who carried out his work very satisfactorily. The bakehouse is lofty and well ventilated, two essentials which make comfort for those who have to work in a bakery. The ovens were built by Mr. Alfred Hunt (of Leicester), one being a drawplate, with a peel oven above.

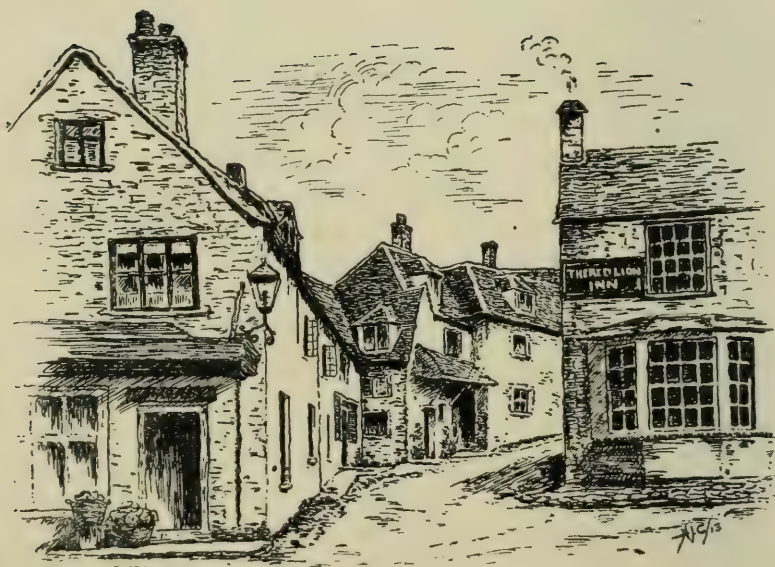
The opening took place in May, 1905, when a tea and entertainment was held to commemorate the event. To Mr. Benjamin Pitt (Treasurer) was delegated the honour of opening the new premises. Mr. Pitt was an old official, and in his remarks at the ceremony he went back to 1884, when the bread trade was but 800 quarterns weekly in comparison with the then average of 10,800 quarterns. He had seen the growth of Branch Stores and Branch Bakeries, of which Nailsworth was the culminating event.

At the meeting Mr. Adam Deans (of London) was the principal speaker, and indeed all the speeches were of a high order. Mr. Deans spoke in eulogistic terms of the new bakery, and said "when they realised that in a great many bakehouses the conditions under which men worked were absolutely deplorable, they felt pleased that Co-operation was stepping in and erecting improved buildings." In the old days anything seemed good enough for a bakehouse. Now this was stopped, and

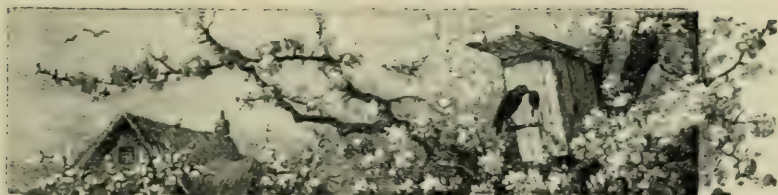
Co-operators had a great deal to do with regard to assisting in the formation of the law, which had brought about better conditions. The cost of the building scheme was a little over £900.

That the policy of our branching out into the adjoining villages has been a success may be judged by the following figures:—

	Caincross.	Branches.
Members, Dec. 31st, 1912 .	1,086	2,621
Trade, 1912	£33,917	£79,231
Bread Sold, 1912	252,297 quarterns.	536,029 quarterns.



A BIT OF OLD NAILSWORTH.



CHAPTER X.

Important Changes—1884-88.

EXTENSIONS IN VIEW—A CHANGE—A STORMY MEETING—THE NEW MANAGER—REPORT FOR 1884—MR. H. WEBB—NEW CHECK SYSTEM—A NEW BAKER—BREVITIES—SECRETARY RESIGNS—CO-OPERATIVE UNION—SHOP HOURS—A NEW OVEN—NEW FEATURES—NEW BUILDING SCHEME.

THE increase of trade during 1883 brought to the forefront the necessity of further extension, and at the beginning of 1884 the Committee were considering the question of enlarging the drapery shop, and the removal of the bakehouse to another part of the premises. In respect to the bakery the idea was to erect new ovens of a type that had recently been adopted in the more progressive bakeries of the county. The Gloucester Society had already put in such ovens, and Mr. Shipway was instructed to inspect these and report thereon as soon as possible.

In the meantime Mr. J. W. Aldridge, who had served his apprenticeship and become an assistant, left the Society to take up his duties as Manager of the Stroud Society, a position which he has held ever since with credit and honour to himself and to the satisfaction of our neighbours in the kindred institution.

About this time, for some reason which was not explained, the Committee took a line of action which seriously affected the harmonious working of the Store. Unknown to the Manager they advertised for a

“thoroughly competent assistant,” and, after some correspondence, Mr. Thomas Lyles, from the Dewsbury Society, was engaged at 26s. per week. As might have been expected, the Manager did not look upon the action with the best of feeling, and when asked at the Committee meeting following the engagement to report as to the capabilities of Mr. Lyles, said, “he may be all right in the Grocery Department, but is not of any use beyond.” He added “that as he had not been consulted prior to an engagement being made he declined to take any responsibility.”

At the end of March the stock was taken, and in due course the result presented to the Committee. The profits were found to be exceptional, and admitted of a dividend of 3s. 6d. in the £, with a sufficient balance left over that would have permitted of an additional 3d. being paid. It is doubtful whether the whole of the profits had been made during the quarter. The probability is that, in view of the circumstances that had arisen, hidden reserves previously existing had now been brought into the accounts.

The Quarterly Meeting for the presentation of this report and balance sheet was held on May 6th, 1884. Mr. H. Webb occupied the chair. After the balance sheet had been passed, the Chairman explained the intentions of the Committee to erect new ovens, in accordance with plans that were passed round the room. The members agreed to this proposal. The Manager then stated that the Committee had engaged an assistant without in any way consulting him, that the said assistant was engaged and brought into the room without his knowledge, and, in consequence of this, unless the young man left he himself should do so at once. A turbulent meeting followed, personalities being freely indulged in, and at a late hour a vote, which had neither proposer or seconder, was carried in favour of the Manager. The meeting was adjourned until a week later, the Committee and Secretary having given notice of their intention to resign. At the adjourned meeting Mr. Webb, who again presided, protested against this meeting being

held, as the vote of the previous meeting had decided the matter. Mr. S. Smart then addressed the meeting on behalf of the Committee, while Mr. Webb spoke on behalf of Mr. Shipway. Other speakers followed, and eventually, upon a ballot being taken, there were 69 votes for the Committee and 56 for the Manager. Mr. Shipway thereupon resigned his position. It was a regrettable termination of a long period of service. Mr. Shipway came to the Society at a critical time, when it was indeed on the verge of ruin; and by his careful management the early difficulties were surmounted, and the Society afterwards maintained in a sound position. His period of service had extended over twenty years.

Mr. Lyles was appointed Manager a week later, and in a short time the strong feeling passed away. But Mr. Webb never afterwards came to the meetings, and intimated that he would not again seek re-election. The change in management caused the oven-building scheme to be abandoned for a time. In July Mr. W. Randall resigned his position as Auditor, and Mr. H. A. Powell undertook the position thus vacated. During the June quarter there was a slight reduction in the membership and rather heavy withdrawals, but the sales were fairly maintained. The dividend, however, dropped to 2s. 3d. in the £. The September quarter was very similar to that of the preceding one, and the dividend was the same.

At the end of 1884, when the Society had been established twenty-one and a half years, the membership reached 301. The quarterly sales were £1,574; share capital, £3,335; value of property, £2,287; and investments, £337; with a dividend for the December quarter of 2s. 6d. At the Annual Meeting following it was reported that the sales had increased nearly £500 on the year, notwithstanding the important changes which had taken place. And, although the dividend had gone down, this did not represent any real loss to the members, as the reduction in the price of goods represented a material difference. The arrangement with the former

Manager had rather fostered the idea of high prices, as the terms under which he worked were a low salary and a percentage on the profits made. The meeting concerned itself chiefly with the change of officers. Mr. William Pitt retired from the Committee after a service of twenty years. He came on the Board in 1865, just when the Society was recovering from the losses of the previous year, and he will be always remembered as one of the pioneers of local Co-operation.

At this meeting Mr. H. Webb retired from the Treasurership, and thus severed an official connection with the Society that had been uninterrupted since the first day the Store was opened. For twenty-two years Mr. Webb had occupied the position of Treasurer, and, it should be mentioned, without any fee or reward. He took a very deep interest in the affairs of the Society, and was ever ready with his advice and influence in the furtherance of its interests. It was indeed fortunate for the movement in this neighbourhood that such men as Mr. Webb identified themselves with the Society in its early days.

Mr. Benjamin Pitt was prevailed upon by the Committee to undertake the duties vacated by Mr. Webb, and he subsequently proved to be a highly capable officer and a sincere friend to the Society. The Committee's choice was cordially accepted by the members.

A serious accident occurred in March of this year by the driver of the Society's cart running into a wagonette belonging to Mr. Chambers. The vehicle was badly damaged, and Mr. Chambers much injured. The result was a compensation claim of £34. 1s. 6d., which the Society had to pay.

From March to June of this year there were strong suspicions of cash leakage in the shop, and when the stock was taken at the end of the June quarter a considerable deficiency was revealed. To make doubly sure that no mistake had been made the stock was re-taken, but the result was practically the same. Up to this time there had been no check whatever upon the cash taken over the counter. The customers paid for their goods or

accounts, and the money was put into one drawer by the Manager, assistant, and apprentices alike. With the loss that had occurred the Committee realised that some different system must be adopted, in order to safeguard the Society's property and to protect the innocent from the guilty. The present paper check, or Failsworth system, was therefore put into operation, and the old system of tin checks abolished. The change had an immediate effect, and those responsible for the leakage were detected. A considerable portion of the loss was recovered, but the matter involved the dismissal of two employees.

Mr. James Pearce was now engaged as baker, and entered upon his duties on October 5th, 1885. The weekly output of bread at this time was about 800 quarterns. Since then the bread trade has become a most important part of the Society's business, and great credit is due to Mr. Pearce for the improvement he has made in the quality of the bread and the manner in which he has discharged his duties. The success of the bread trade has been continuous from this period, and has influenced the general success of the Society.

At the November Quarterly Meeting the Chairman was enabled to offer his congratulations to the members on the steady progress that was again being made. The dividend was increased to 2s. 6d. in the £, and there was abundant testimony as to the excellent quality of the goods now supplied by the Society, and that the prices were generally lower than they had been hitherto.

At this meeting Mr. Pitt, although a member of less than two years' standing, showed his conversion to Co-operative principles by urging those present to do all they could to induce others to join them, and thus participate in the many advantages members were now enjoying. It would indeed appear that there was a spirit of jollification about the whole proceedings, for a feature at the meeting was the singing of a couple of songs by Mr. Lyles, the Manager. From 1886 the minutes reveal a closer interest in the business. Where formerly so many meetings were called and had the words "no business"

against the date, now at every meeting there was something to record. One of the matters discussed at this period was the question of adopting the cash system, but it was finally decided that the members would have to be educated up to this system before it could be brought into operation. The step towards "educating" was left to a future occasion.

On November 29th, 1886, Mr. D. J. Close announced his intention of leaving for America, and desired to be immediately relieved of the Secretaryship. Mr. Close accepted office in 1881, and it was with regret that the Committee received his resignation. Mr. B. Pitt undertook the duties until the Annual Meeting, including the preparation of the December quarter's balance sheet. The December quarter's report was of a satisfactory character, and for the year 1886 very good progress was recorded. The sales for 1885—the year before the Branch was opened—were £5,995, while for 1886 they had reached £7,978. The membership for the year showed a substantial increase, being now 435, of which number ninety represented the new members at Stonehouse.

At the Annual Meeting held early in 1887 there were many speeches of congratulation at the new turn of affairs. The opening of the Stonehouse Branch had induced a broader view of Co-operation, and it was refreshing to hear words of appreciation and commendation from the people who had come within the movement so recently. The Committee recommended Mr. F. G. Pitt, a son of Mr. Benjamin Pitt, for the vacant post as Secretary, which the meeting accepted. Another old Committee-man in the person of Mr. Samuel Smart retired from the Board at this time. Mr. Smart came on the Committee in 1869. He continued in office until 1877, and afterwards from 1885 to 1887. He was an ardent Co-operator, and took a very keen interest in the affairs of this Society.

In the early part of 1887 the Society commenced to pay an annual subscription of £5 to the Co-operative Union. The annual payment entitled the Society to rank as a member of the Union, with power to send two delegates to Congress. The Co-operative Union is an

institution charged with the duty of keeping alive and diffusing a knowledge of the principles of the Co-operative movement, and giving to its active members, by advice and instruction, the literary, legal, and commercial help they may require. During this year the Society also became affiliated with the first Gloucester and Hereford Co-operative Association, whose chief work was to go into districts where Co-operation was little known, and either assist in starting a new Society or to establish a Branch of an existing one.

Co-operators have been pioneers in the reduction of shop hours, and by a gradual process have brought about what may be considered very satisfactory hours from an employee's point of view. In March, 1887, the hour for closing on Friday was increased from 8 p.m. to 9 p.m., but was reduced on Thursday from 4 p.m. to 2 p.m., and shortly after to 1 p.m.

The oven question, which had been left over in consequence of Mr. Shipway's resignation, was again revived, and, with a tenant leaving the "Golden Cross," a good opportunity presented itself for making bakehouse extensions and erecting a new oven. A room adjoining the old bakehouse was therefore requisitioned and made suitable for a new bakery. Messrs. Joseph Baker and Sons were then given an order to erect a patent hot-air oven of the latest type. Mr. Thos. Pitt made the alterations to the building. The whole of the work was completed in 1887, and baking commenced in December of that year. The bread was an improvement on that produced in the old type of oven, but a mistake was made in not erecting a larger oven, as the bread trade increased so fast that in a few months the old oven, which had been discarded, had to be brought into use again.

The new Manager proved to be what is very often described as "a young man in a hurry." True, his managerial duties were of a varied character, including the purchase of sheep and pigs, and killing and preparing them for sale, but he had greater ambitions than these. He evidently aimed at making the Society quite independent. He will be most remembered for his

tea-blending experiment. Hitherto, the Society had been content to rely upon the larger experience and greater purchasing power of the professional tea blenders, but our friend was quite equal to the occasion, and spent considerable time and energy in trying to displace the blends of these firms. One can admire his courage, but not his discretion, for the members were never really satisfied with the change. It could scarcely be expected that the blends of a little, though ambitious, Store in the West country would compare favourably with those of the large wholesale packers situated at the port of entry for the bulk. Tea blending never paid for the time and trouble involved, and when in subsequent years the teas of the C.W.S. were given free play there was more satisfaction both to the customers and the Society. Some of his ideas were more practical, and were the foundation for increased business. He was responsible for commencing in a small way the coal trade, and the improved accommodation in the several departments at the Central Store must be placed to his credit. In connection with the coal trade it is interesting to note that good quality could then be procured for 15s. 6d. per ton. It was a period of general progress. Sales for the year 1887 increased by £1,463 and membership by 102. The Society now numbered 537 members.

With the increasing business a further extension of the premises at Cainscross was deemed necessary in 1888. This scheme permitted the organisation of the business into departments—grocery, drapery (with boots and shoes), butchering, and crockery, which were now to be worked separately. This meant considerable alteration to the interior of the existing shop premises, together with the building of the present drapery shop with the hall above, and on ground formerly occupied by the Golden Cross Inn. Mr. W. Clissold was the architect. The contract for the building was given to Messrs. English and Sons, and the shop fittings to Messrs. Parnell and Co., Bristol. Business was carried on under difficulties during these alterations, but the improvements effected were very considerable, and the premises were made

more adaptable for the increasing business that was to follow.

The sales for 1888 were £12,966, and showed an increase of £3,031 on the year, equal to 25 per cent, and were a remarkable advance on the sales of 1884. The dividend was kept at 2s. 6d. throughout the year, while ample provision had been made for depreciation.



CHAPTER XI.

The Spirit of Progress—1889-92.

NEW EXTENSIONS—THE FLOOD TIDE—FIRST DELEGATES TO CONGRESS—MR. G. BRAIN RETIRES—DEATH OF SECRETARY—ELECTION OF MR. PEARCE—MANAGER RESIGNS—UNSATISFACTORY REPORT—A BETTER RESULT—RENEWED CONFIDENCE—A CHANGE OF COMMITTEE—THE SEQUEL—NEW RULES—A GOOD YEAR.

WITH a record increase in business during 1888 and the completion of extensive alterations, the year 1889 opened with great possibilities for future expansion. The new extensions at the Central Stores had involved an expenditure of £1,600, and this had increased the expenses in interest and depreciation by £220 per annum. But the outlay had provided facilities for doing a much larger trade, and it rested with the Committee and Manager to make the best use of these.

The arrangements for the opening were made on an imposing scale, and were deemed of sufficient importance to occupy three columns of matter in the local press the week following the event. The opening took place on March 2nd, 1889, and Mr. Joseph Weare (member of the Committee and the oldest member of the Society) formally opened the door, and addressed those surrounding him as follows:—"Ladies and Gentlemen,—Being the oldest member of the Society, I have been requested to formally open this building to-day. I do so feeling confident that the steps taken by this Society in erecting the new building and renovating the old premises will prove to be steps in the right direction, as it will give facilities for doing a much larger amount of business with greater convenience and despatch than could possibly

have been done in the old building. I trust that success will follow the Society, and that it will prosper and still dispense the blessings of Co-operation for many generations to come." There was a large number of people present, who inspected the various parts of the premises, and expressed much satisfaction in the new arrangements. A conference immediately followed in the new hall, under the auspices of the Gloucestershire and Hereford Association, at which a paper was read by Mr. G. Brooks (then Chairman of the Committee), entitled "Bonus to Labour." There were many delegates present from other Societies. In the evening a great tea and meeting took place in the Subscription Rooms, Stroud. Seven hundred tea tickets were sold, and for the meeting the rooms were crowded to excess. Mr. J. Clay presided, and the principal speaker was Mr. E. W. Greening (of London).

The Society appeared now to be on the flood tide of success, and a new spirit showed itself in the attitude of the Committee and officials. New projects were continually coming before the Board, and late Committee meetings became the rule. Within less than a month after the new opening at Cainscross there was a proposal to start a Branch Store at Nailsworth. This was discussed at considerable length at several meetings. Visits were paid to Nailsworth, and efforts made to secure premises, but finally the matter was abandoned.

The Co-operative Congress came in for consideration, and the question of sending delegates officially was discussed for the first time. Messrs. John Kendall and R. Warner were, as a result, sent as the Society's delegates to that year's Congress, which was held at Ipswich.

A proposal was made to close the shop for the dinner-hour, from 11-30 to 12-30. This idea was adopted on June 1st and continued for six months. During the March quarter of this year fifty-five new members joined the Society, but when the stock was taken the results disclosed, in spite of all the increased trade, a marked reduction in the profits. Expenses cannot be piled up indefinitely without some effect on the resources of the

Society, and it was now becoming a question whether too much zeal had not been exercised in the expenditure of capital and the expenses of the business. At this period the Society had practically no reserve, and the first set-back showed itself in a reduction of the dividend. A dividend of 2s. 4d. was paid, but it was a strain to do this. Nothing was added to the reserve fund, while the depreciation was cut down to one-half of what should have been allowed. The June quarter's results were no better; indeed, if the proper allowance had been made for depreciation the dividend would not have exceeded 2s. 2d. in the £. To make matters worse, the new Drapery Department was not working satisfactorily. Strong complaints came from the members, and shortly after a change had to be made.

About this time Mr. George Brain, who had been a member of the Committee for twenty years, and, since 1878, Chairman of the Committee, retired from the Board. He had been a loyal worker from the commencement, and the Society is indebted for the many years of excellent service which he rendered.

Through the death of Mr. F. G. Pitt, the Secretaryship became vacant in September, 1889. Mr. Pitt had only been Secretary for two years, and his death was much regretted. His life appeared to have been one of great promise.

The September quarter showed a good increase in the sales, but the profits were again unsatisfactory. True, a dividend of 2s. 4d. in the £ was paid, but subsequent events revealed the fact that this had not really been earned. The meeting for the submission of this quarter's balance sheet was held on November 5th. In the report a reference was made to the death of Mr. Pitt, and to the vacancy of the position of Secretary.

Several candidates had sent in their names to the Committee, and a certain applicant was chosen for recommendation by them. In view of this election there was a crowded meeting of members. Mr. Lyles, the Manager, in referring to the death of the late Secretary, took occasion to speak of the importance of securing the

best possible man as a successor, saying that the matter would be quite safe in the hands of the Committee, and appealed to the meeting to let it remain there. The ballot box, however, was asked for, and two nominations were put in—one by the Committee, and Mr. O. J. Pearce by the members. In the words of the minutes “the whole of the members went straight for Mr. Pearce,” who was therefore elected.

Mr. O. J. Pearce had been Manager at the Stonehouse Branch since its opening, and met with an unfortunate accident on Saturday evening, September 26th, 1887. He was coming down Rowcroft on one of the high bicycles, which were then in vogue, and had a serious fall. His injuries were of such a character as to necessitate his removal to the hospital, where he was detained; and through the permanent injury to his right hand he was unable to follow his usual employment. The Society thus lost for a time a good and painstaking servant, and it is certain that in this election of Mr. Pearce as Secretary the members wished to show their sympathy. The duties of Secretary were, perhaps, somewhat new to him, but he became a most efficient and capable official. It is to the credit of the Committee that his appointment was cordially accepted.

A fortnight afterwards Mr. Lyles tendered his resignation as Manager. This was not unexpected by the Committee, but it came as a surprise to the members. Mr. Lyles had occupied the position for five and a half years, but short as this time had been he had seen many changes inaugurated. His successor was Mr. B. Hudson, who had been Manager at the Stonehouse Branch for a little over two years.

These changes occurred in December, and at the end of the month when the stock was taken an unsatisfactory result was revealed. The stock for the previous quarter had apparently been credited at a higher figure than its value justified, and it looked as though there had been a straining to pay the usual dividends for several quarters, when in reality they had not been fully earned. In the report issued with the balance sheet the Committee

referred to the reduction in the profits, and while recommending a dividend of 1s. 8d. in the £ gave hopes of a better state of things in the near future.

At the Quarterly Meeting following there was a very large attendance of members. Mr. W. Pitt, an old Committee-man, said he could not understand why the expenses were so high quarter after quarter; this was indeed a pertinent point. There were plenty of other speakers, some wanted to know how the deficiency arose. The Committee, however, asked for a renewal of confidence, which the meeting eventually gave by re-electing the retiring members, but the Auditors did not seek re-election, and Messrs. S. J. Dudbridge and G. F. Payne were appointed.

The report for March quarter, 1900, was naturally looked forward to with a certain amount of anxiety by the Committee and the members alike. The average dividend earned for the previous four quarters, when allowance had been made for proper depreciation, had not exceeded 2s. in the £. This result, however, was better than anticipated, and admitted of a dividend of 2s. 4d., with a fair amount for depreciation.

The June quarter showed further improvement in both sales and profits, and the same dividend was declared, but double the amount was set aside for depreciation, and the first time for many years a sum was added to the reserve fund.

In consequence of the increased sales in bread, both the bakehouse and ovens had become inadequate to meet the requirements of the business, and further accommodation had to be considered. A scheme was duly prepared, and passed by the members at the November meeting. Mr. P. Ford was given the contract for the bakery extension at a cost of £127. 10s., and the oven was built by Messrs. Joseph Baker and Sons at a cost of about £190.

As foretold in the Committee's report when the dividend went down to 1s. 8d. confidence was soon restored, and now many new ideas were put forward in Committee for increasing the business and consolidating



BRAMWELL HUDSON,
GENERAL MANAGER, 1889-1913.



NO. 1 BRANCH BAKERY AND STABLES,
STONEHOUSE.



THE STEEP, WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE.

the Society's position. The coal trade was developed, and lamps and petroleum were introduced as other articles in the Society's business. Certain lines in furniture were stocked; and at one Committee meeting nearly a whole evening was spent in the purchase of spectacles.

It is a feature of Co-operative trading that, before distributing profit in the shape of dividend, some regard is paid to creating reserve funds, especially in the direction for the provision of the depreciation of property. The object, of course, being to release as much capital as possible for the development of the business, and to place the assets upon the most favourable basis. Utensils for trade are as far as possible paid for out of the current expenses; where this cannot immediately be done they are gradually cancelled quarter by quarter as the profits are made.

Up to 1890 there had been no such policy in our affairs. Even meat hooks and shop knives were added to the value of fixed stock, so that at this time the assets must have been considerably overstated in the balance sheet. A new system was adopted in October, 1890, for setting aside a sum every quarter equivalent to the wear and tear, and proper depreciation, which inevitably takes place in all buildings and fixed and rolling stock. Interest was henceforward added to the reserve fund. As an incentive to increased business a tea and meeting was held in the Co-operative Hall in November, when there were about 350 present. Mr. Brooks presided at this meeting, and Mr. Jos. Clay (of Gloucester) was the chief speaker. Although the year 1890 had commenced under a cloud, it finished up with sales for the year of £16,739, being an increase of £1,319. There was an average dividend of 2s. 4d., with £110 allowed for depreciation, and £14 to the reserve fund. The membership was now 711.

There was an even better rate of progress in the year following, a feature of which was a substantial increase in the bread sales. This necessitated the introduction of machinery in the bakery. A Crossley gas engine was installed, and a dough kneeder put in. These, with a few

other minor alterations, involved an addition to the buildings and fixtures account of £670.

The Committee had now many things to engage their attention, and, while business matters occupied much of their time, they were not unmindful of educational needs. In the early winter of 1891 propaganda meetings were held at Cainscross and Stonehouse, which had very beneficial results. But however smoothly a stream may appear to run a small twig will ruffle the surface, even if it does not alter the course.

An incident at the Annual Meeting of February, 1892, had some such effect upon the steady flow of the Society's business. At this meeting Mr. G. Brooks presided, and in his opening remarks dealt with the progress of the previous year and various features in the accounts. But while the increase of business was deemed satisfactory, the expenses and addition to buildings and fixtures called forth much adverse criticism, and one ex-Committee-man questioned the right of the Committee to build without the previous sanction of the members. In defence the Chairman invited a vote of censure, but this was not forthcoming.

The election for Committee was at that time voted for in the room by show of hands. The Committee were six in number, including the Chairman, who was chosen from among themselves. They were elected for two years, and half of them retired annually. At this period there were four representing Cainscross, and two for Stonehouse. In the voting Mr. Cole, a Stonehouse member, was defeated in favour of Mr. F. Randall. In consequence of this result Mr. Beaver, the other Stonehouse representative, resigned, giving as a reason that he would have no "company" home. Stonehouse then had no representative, Mr. S. Holder being elected for a term of twelve months in Mr. Beaver's place.

The result of this meeting gave much dissatisfaction to the Stonehouse members, and as a consequence the Committee received a requisition signed by thirty members at their next meeting calling for the revision of the rules. It should be understood that hitherto the

Quarterly Meetings being held at Cainscross, there was a preponderance of members attending from that district. The representation of Stonehouse was always, therefore, at the mercy of Cainscross. It was now suggested that the Stonehouse representation should be fixed by rule. The Committee accepted the requisition, and took the opportunity of proposing a considerable number of additions and alterations to the rules. A Special Meeting was held on the last Saturday in February, and there was a crowded attendance of members. It was the intention of the Committee to take the rules one by one, commencing with the first; but before any rule could be put Mr. D. May moved that the proposed new rule relating to the increase of the Committee be taken first. This rule was to increase the Committee to eight, in addition to a President. Mr. S. Davis thereupon moved that this rule be adopted. Mr. May then put an amendment that the rule remain unaltered, which was carried. On its rejection the Chairman, without going through any of the other rules, forthwith closed the meeting, to the surprise and dissatisfaction of many of the members, as the meeting was called to revise the rules and only one had been dealt with.

At a Committee meeting held two days later a letter was received from Mr. Brooks, to the effect that he had considered the situation, and had come to the conclusion that he would be of greater service to the Society as a private member under the present circumstances; he therefore tendered his resignation as a member of the Committee. Mr. Brooks was, however, asked to reconsider his decision, which he consented to do. In the meantime, another requisition was sent in from the members calling for another special meeting to deal with the rules, and this was fixed to be held at the conclusion of the next ordinary business meeting.

The Special Meeting for the proposed alteration of rules was held in May, and 120 members were present; Mr. B. Pitt being in the chair. The whole of the rules were passed through without practically any discussion. The chief points embodied in the alterations were: That

the depreciation was to be fixed at $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent on fixtures, and $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent on buildings. The Committee were empowered to receive loans up to £20 from any one person. Members were allowed to hold shares up to £200; previously £100 had been the limit. For the election of Committee candidates were to be proposed by nomination papers, and voted for by ballot. The number of Committee-men was unaltered, but the President added.

Thus ended a sequence of events which created much interest and perhaps a little feeling, but in the outcome was conducive of some good. The members were brought together in such numbers as had not been witnessed for very many years, and the points raised were an education to most of them.

An indication of this was shown in the substantial progress made during 1892. The sales increased to the extent of £2,578, and the members by 44, while the average dividend was 2s. $3\frac{3}{4}$ d. Considerable additions had been made to the fixtures account, but, on the other hand, the depreciation allowed had been on a liberal scale. Another feature was the commencement of the Penny Bank, which came into operation with the alteration of rules.

It must be noted that a further step in the reduction of shop hours was made at this time. On Thursdays the hour of closing was reduced from 2 o'clock to 1, and on Saturdays from 9 to 8 p.m.



CHAPTER XII.

Further Developments—1893-96.

IMPORTANT MEETING—PAYMENT OF COMMITTEE—NEW METHOD OF ELECTION—RULES AGAIN—REPAYMENT OF LOANS—COMPETITION FOR OFFICE—A BOOT DEPARTMENT—EMPLOYEES' HOLIDAY—FURTHER EXTENSIONS—A SUB-COMMITTEE—NEW PREMISES FOR STONEHOUSE—EXHIBITION—A RECORD YEAR—CLOTHING CLUB—NEW STABLES—BRANCH REPRESENTATION.

THE February meeting of 1893 was of more than usual importance. The new rules had come into operation, and with them the old system of voting for the election of Committee by show of hands was done away with, and that of the ballot box substituted. There was the election for the new office of President, in addition to several other important modifications in the constitution of the Society. During the past year Stonehouse had been unrepresented on the Committee, a matter which the outer districts were determined to remedy, for contingents were present from Stonehouse, Eastington, King Stanley, and Dursley.

The meeting was indeed a record one, and those present well exceeded 200 in number. The report and balance sheet occupied but little time, as the two points on which the members were most interested related to a resolution for the payment of Committee and the method of election. Up to the present the Committee had received no fees, but with the growth of the Society it was felt that the time had arrived when something should be done towards recognising the services of elected officials. The Committee stated their case, and then left the

question of remuneration and the amount to the feeling of the meeting. A very lively discussion followed, when eventually a resolution was voted upon by ballot: "That the Committee be paid a fee of 1s. per week if present." There were 120 in favour and 79 against.

For the three vacancies on the Committee there were eight nominations, and two for President, viz., Mr. G. Brooks, who was Chairman of the Committee, and Mr. Joseph Weare, an old Committee-man. The voting resulted in favour of Mr. Weare by a majority of fourteen. Mr. Brooks, who had not taken the precaution to be nominated for the Committee, was therefore out of office. This fact, together with the doubt as to whether Mr. Weare's nomination had been handed in by the time specified in the rules, caused a number of heated questions, and raised quite a storm for a time. Mr. W. Collins, who was then a stranger in the neighbourhood, explained that he was the seconder of Mr. Weare's nomination, and that he had placed the paper in the letter box on the last day for nominations, where it was found the following morning by the Manager. He further gave reasons why he had put his name to Mr. Weare's paper, and succeeded in calming the meeting.

In the election for Committee two Stonehouse candidates headed the poll—Messrs. W. Cole and T. Miles, with 103 and 94 votes respectively. Mr. Collins made the third successful candidate with 82 votes. The others were Messrs. A. J. Hoskins, 81; Beaver, 60; D. May, 52; and S. Holder, 29.

After the meeting, matters resumed their normal course, but it was not long before a further alteration in the rules was deemed necessary. Some members had been investing capital in the Society, and making their purchases elsewhere. To remedy this, the Quarterly Meeting of May, 1893, passed the rule—"That in order to receive five per cent upon their share capital members must spend £2 in each quarter, and if their purchases do not reach that sum they will receive but $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, and no interest will be given to non-purchasing members." At this meeting it was also passed that the

Committee be allowed the sum of 25s. a quarter for their services at stocktaking.

The balance sheet for the June quarter of this year disclosed a reduction in the profit, and the dividend declined to 2s. 2d. in the £. There were several exceptional circumstances to account for this. It was a year of drought, when hay reached £8 per ton, and the advance in price of several important commodities did not permit of the usual profit being made. The explanations given at the time were acceptable to the members.

During the year very little expenditure had been made in addition to buildings and fixed stock. With the increase of share capital the Committee had more cash than was needful for the business. The loan account, which had been in existence since the Society commenced, had over £1,000 to its credit; and it was therefore resolved to pay off the whole of this. Notice to withdraw a portion of it was given in the early part of the year, and in October a further notice was given for the remainder to be withdrawn by the end of the year.

The increase in trade during 1893 was much less than usual; but, nevertheless, the financial position had been further strengthened. A number of investments had been made in other Co-operative institutions, and two or three loans advanced to members.

Propaganda meetings were held at Cainscross, Stonehouse, and Dursley, all of which were well attended.

At the Annual Meeting of 1894 there was a keen competition for office. Mr. R. Warner was proposed with Mr. Weare for the Presidency, but the latter held his position by a majority of forty votes. For the three vacancies on the Committee there were eight candidates, and of the retiring members Mr. T. Ford gave place to Mr. Hoskins. Mr. Ford had six years' service to his credit. At this meeting sanction was given for the erection of a new oven at Cainscross.

Up to this time the Drapery and Boots had been treated as one department; but with the increase of trade, and the demand for boot repairing, it was decided to

separate the Boots from the Drapery. Mr. George Bennett was engaged to take charge of the new department in April of this year.

The business had again commenced to forge ahead, and in the first two quarters of the year very satisfactory increases were recorded; profits, too, were of a corresponding character, and admitted of an increase in the dividend to 2s. 5d. in the £. The surplus capital was again too much for the requirements of the business, and with a view to finding an outlet a Special Meeting was called in July to discuss the question of cottage building. The meeting, however, was rather of opinion that it would be better for members to purchase or build their own houses and borrow from the Society, than for the Society to undertake any scheme of cottage building. An effort was, nevertheless, made to purchase a piece of land in Foxmoor for £270, but this sum was exceeded at the sale by a bid on behalf of the trustees of Ebley Chapel.

The Society had now 1,000 members on its books, and to commemorate the event a meeting was held at Cainscross. Mr. Weare was the Chairman, and in his remarks he went over the earlier struggles, and said they now had the satisfaction of having one of the best Stores in the county.

For the September quarter what may be termed the best report to that time was presented. After a long interval a 2s. 6d. dividend was again declared; and in addition there was an allowance of £79 for depreciation, and £19 for the reserve fund.

During this year the employees petitioned the Committee for an allowance of a week's holiday in each year, which, after consideration, the Committee agreed to grant.

The sales for 1894 were £24,504, being an increase of £2,523 on the year; and there was a membership of 1,067. Of the sales recorded those for Stonehouse were £6,414, and Dursley £3,282.

The year 1894 was noted for low prices. Bread at one time was 3½d. per quartern, and it did not exceed 4d. per quartern throughout the year.

Sub-Committees have never been much in vogue in this Society, but in the early years of the Dursley Branch the members felt they were somewhat out of touch with Cainscross and desired a representative link with the central body, in order to present their views or make known their wants. There had been a previous effort in this direction without any material results, and now another trial was made to meet local desires through the work of a sub-committee under certain defined rules. This Committee held a considerable number of meetings, and did what was possible for the good of the Branch within the limits of their powers. But having no direct representation on the Board they felt their position to be unsatisfactory, and eventually resigned in a body.

In April, 1895, new premises were purchased at Stonehouse from Mr. Truscott for £1,280. The Branch had been established ten years, during which time the business had been of a progressive character, and it was at this time doing a trade of £7,000 per annum. The little shop at the top of Regent Street, while sufficient for the requirements of the first few years of the Branch, was now altogether too small. The new premises were fitted out for grocery, drapery, and boots, and were opened on November 16th, 1895. In addition to meeting the requirements of the trade, the purchase of this property provided an outlet for the surplus capital.

The purchase and occupation of the Stonehouse new premises seemed to open a new era in the history of the Society. From this year the prosperity increased at a greater ratio than ever before.

In connection with the opening ceremony a day of festivities was held. This included an exhibition of Co-operative productions, and a great tea and public meeting. The proceedings were a marked success, and brought together practically the whole membership of the Branch, in addition to many others from the adjoining districts. It is computed that quite six hundred people sat down to the tea, which had to be carried out in sections. At the exhibition some of the best-known Productive Societies were represented, among which the

Co-operative Wholesale Society and the Brownfield Guild Pottery were prominent. The latter Society had some beautiful specimens of the potter's art. Up to this time local Co-operators, while long familiar with a shop or store as a centre of Co-operative distribution, had no conception that the working classes owned mills, factories, and all the instruments of production. The exhibition furnished a valuable object-lesson of the power of the movement, and subsequent results have proved that its practical teachings were not thrown away.

Mr. T. Miles was the Chairman at the opening of the exhibition, and, in a brief, earnest speech, welcomed the representatives and visitors from other Societies. There were several fine speeches at this ceremony. Mr. Jos. Clay was, of course, in his element at such an event, and went over the ground of what Co-operation had done, what it was doing, and what it would do. Mr. Campbell (of Leeds) spoke of himself as a Co-operator from its earliest days. He was then eighty-six years of age, and could tell something of the disabilities which formerly Co-operators had to encounter. Mr. T. Blandford, of the Productive Federation, was there—a fine example of an unselfish worker, and a co-partnership enthusiast who afterwards sacrificed his life for the work. He explained in his eloquent way the meaning of Co-operative production and co-partnership, so that the least intelligent could understand. Mr. Joseph Weare, the President, entered the shop and declared the place open for business, and Mr. Clay succeeded in becoming the first purchaser. There was a public meeting in the evening, but the room available was not nearly large enough for the purpose. Mr. J. Clay presided. The speech of the evening was given by Mr. Blandford. In his remarks he mentioned that there were then 120 mills and factories in this country where Co-operative production was carried on, and he pleaded eloquently for the retail support of such productions.

With so many important events occurring during the year it was not surprising that the sales from January to December should show one continual increase, and,

in spite of the capital expenditure, the Society's finances were not in any way impaired. On the other hand, the increase of trade had been more than sufficient to meet the additional cost in interest and depreciation, and for the second half of the year a dividend of 2s. 7d. in the £ was declared. The year's sales were £29,201, and showed an increase of £4,697. The depreciation allowed during the year was £410, and additions to the reserve fund £108, while the increase in members was no less than 341. The bread trade was exceptional. The increase was equivalent to over five hundred sacks of flour—in bread, 51,241 quarterns. These results necessitated further extensions and alterations. The ovens at Cainscross were working at their utmost capacity, and both horses and additional stable room were needed.

It is a feature of country life that organisations which exist to promote better standards of life among the people inevitably turn to ideas of thrift as a means to the desired end, and thus it quite frequently happens that churches and chapels organise coal and clothing clubs; but it also frequently happens that the Co-operative Society is ignored and private traders are favoured when the goods have to be supplied. The Committee had noticed this, and on February 1st, 1896, started coal and clothing clubs in connection with the Store. From the commencement they were thoroughly appreciated, and were more successful than all the other local clubs could ever be. The tickets when issued were made applicable for any department, except grocery, bread, and meat.

Early in 1896 a scheme for the erection of new stables at Cainscross was discussed for some time in Committee, and eventually it was decided to do away with the small stables then in use adjoining the bakehouse, and to erect a three-storey building on the sloping ground at the top of the orchard. Provision was made on the ground floor for six horses. The first floor was to serve as a storage for hay, straw, and corn, and the top storey, which came on a level with the yard, was to be used as a cart-shed. At the May Quarterly Meeting Mr. Warner explained the scheme, and mentioned the probable cost

at £400. With the members' approval the work was put in hand, and within three months the stables were completed.

Another matter which occupied considerable attention at this time was that of Branch representation on the Committee, and for which it may be said the Dursley members were responsible. It will be remembered that a Dursley Local Committee had existed, but that owing to its isolation from the Executive it had to be abandoned. The Dursley people wanted something more than a Sub-Committee without powers, and, arising out of a meeting between a deputation from Dursley and the General Committee, a scheme was drawn up, which was submitted to a Branch meeting at Dursley and approved of. It was put before a Special General Meeting, held at Cainscross in November, 1896, and agreed to. The scheme provided for the increase of the Committee from six to eight members—four to be elected from amongst the Cainscross members, two from Stonehouse, and one each from Dursley and Nailsworth. The system of voting was by ballot, and this was to take place at the respective places of business. Provision was also made for Branch meetings to be held each quarter. These meetings, however, as at present carried out, were not put into operation until some years later. The scheme of representation as originally drawn up is in actual working to-day, with the exception that Stonehouse has lost one of its representatives to King Stanley. These new rules came into operation at the February meeting of 1897, when there was a keen contest at Cainscross and Stonehouse for the election of Committee. Dursley and Nailsworth sent their first representatives in Mr. T. H. Griffin and Mr. S. Allsop respectively.

A small matter, but a question which caused considerable discussion at the time, was the erection of a turret clock at Cainscross. Mr. Brooks had the proposal in hand, and pressed it forward at two Quarterly Meetings, and finally obtained the members' approval for its erection at a cost of £20.

The year 1896 certainly reaped the advantage of the many extensions which had taken place during the two previous years. There was growth in every direction, and the trade of the year was of an exceptional character. The sales were as follows:—Cainscross, £17,719; Stonehouse, £8,776; Dursley, £4,559; and Nailsworth, £4,024. The share capital was £14,137, and the members 1,604.



HIGH STREET, STONEHOUSE
Society's Premises on the left).



CHAPTER XIII.

Educational Matters.

“To realise the wishes of the sage
And out of mental darkness call up ‘light!’
Truth must shine forth; fell wrong, dark error fly,
If ‘Light’ be still our constant cry.”

EARLIER EDUCATIONAL WORK—THE “ECONOMIST”—CO-OPERATIVE MEETINGS—EDUCATIONAL COMMITTEE—DURSLEY EXHIBITION—CLASSES AND LECTURES—CHILDREN’S TEAS—COMMITTEE DISSOLVED—CHILDREN’S FETES.

THE history of Co-operation in this district would be incomplete without some reference to the Society’s educational work. There are many ways of carrying out Co-operative education. Some Societies have separate Committees and special funds allotted to them, and are responsible only to the Quarterly Meetings; while in others the work is carried on by the General Committee. In the former case there is usually more “system” about the work, and a larger grasp of Co-operative principles is obtained. The real point, after all, is to educate the public into the principles of the movement, so that they may better understand the purpose of Co-operation—to know why the Store was first started, why it exists, and what are the Society’s ultimate aims and objects.

Up to 1892 the educational work of this Society was limited to the holding of meetings and the arrangements

for addresses to be delivered by various speakers. That such meetings were productive of much good is best exemplified by the consistent loyalty to the Store at a time when it was hardly worth while to be a Co-operator.

The time came, however, when something more than meetings were needed. Co-operation may have been well understood among the older members in the immediate vicinity of Cainscross; but now the membership in the outer districts had to be considered, and in order to reach these the idea of publishing and distributing a monthly record was conceived.

THE "ECONOMIST."

The *Economist* came into existence in January, 1893. It was very modest in the number of its pages, while the style and get-up were very much behind those now published. The first issue numbered 1,000, and contained an article on Co-operation, another on the Co-operative Wholesale Society, a page on the C.W.S. Quarterly Meetings, and some jottings on current matters. There was also a report of a Co-operative meeting held at Wotton-under-Edge, under the auspices of the Gloucester and Hereford Association, for the purpose of starting an independent Store there.

The *Economist* was intended to be, and always has been, a medium of communication between the Committee and the members. In its pages are furnished from time to time the reports of the business done, and the meetings that are held. Questions which concern the membership, and the movement generally, are dealt with as they arise.

The Press has ever been a potent influence in the affairs and destinies of a nation. In the same way, though perhaps in a lesser degree, institutions are influenced by the written words. The educational value of a journal cannot, perhaps, be estimated; but our magazine has undoubtedly made for a better knowledge of the Society in particular, and of the movement in general. The ordinary newspaper does not, and cannot be expected to, supply matter relative to the Co-operative movement; and it is only by such organs as this, along with such

national publications as the *Co-operative News*, *Millgate Monthly*, and *Our Circle*, that the principles of Co-operation can be dealt with. There have been articles on many and varied subjects. Co-operation from many aspects has been dealt with, and current topics have occupied much space from time to time. A great number of Co-operative speeches have appeared in its pages, while each item in it may be likened to the grains of sand, or the leaves of trees, which become substantial forces in combination.

And so the snowflakes grow to drifts,
And grains of sand to mountains.

The editorship has remained in the same hands since the first issue.

CO-OPERATIVE MEETINGS.

Co-operative tea parties and public meetings are quite an institution in most Societies, and during the next few years the Cainscross Society was not by any means behind in this respect. A goodly number of these were held, particularly in the winter of 1896-7. Nailsworth had one in October, when Mr. Blandford was the chief speaker. In November there was one at Stonehouse, with Mr. George Hawkins as speaker; and another at Dursley, where Mr. Tutt attended. These men, who were leaders of thought in the Co-operative world, have all since passed away, but Co-operation is all the richer for their lives of devotion to the cause.

The last of the series of meetings was held at Cainscross. At this Mr. H. Vivian paid his first visit to the district as a Co-operative speaker, where the eloquence and force of his remarks created no small impression. Mr. Vivian is a great advocate of Co-operative production, and he expressed the opinion that if Co-operators could make this side of the movement a success, the producers and employers would become as one body, and the painful incidents of trade disputes and strikes would be unknown.

The *Economist* came out at this time in an improved form, and in its pages were a number of articles contributed by Messrs. W. G. Browne and H. G. Brooks.



NO. 4 BRANCH, WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE.



NO. 5 BRANCH, KING STANLEY.



ORLANDO J. PEARCE,
SECRETARY, 1889-1912.

AN EDUCATIONAL COMMITTEE.

During 1898 there was a feeling expressed at the Quarterly Meetings that something more should be done in Co-operative education. Tea meetings and the publication of a monthly record had doubtless accomplished much, but there were branches of work which had not yet been touched. It was ultimately decided to form an Educational Committee to deal with all matters of this kind. The Committee was formed in September, 1898, and consisted of a proportion from the General Committee, with an equal number nominated from the members. Mr. J. R. Pearson and Mr. W. Nuttall were the first Chairman and Secretary respectively.

The programme for the first winter session as originally drawn up was an ambitious one, and embraced a series of tea meetings, lectures, and classes. This, however, had to be considerably modified, and as actually carried out consisted of three tea meetings, three lectures, and an exhibition at Dursley.

At the November meeting the existence of an Educational Committee was acknowledged and approved. Two good speeches were given at this meeting by Mr. Pearson and Mr. Nuttall. The latter gave concrete examples of the benefit the Co-operative classes in the North had been to members' sons.

The advent of an Educational Committee in the affairs of the Society certainly had the effect of making it more a centre of interest. Through the medium of the entertainments a number of the best Co-operative speakers were brought before the membership, and the matter of their remarks must inevitably have been an inspiration to local Co-operators and workers at the time. During this, the first season, the classes and lectures were all held at Cainscross.

The Dursley exhibition, as arranged for in their programme, was held in February, 1899. The reason that prompted this event was the success of the Stonehouse exhibition held in 1895, and which served as a fine object-lesson for Co-operators. Previous to these exhibitions it is more than probable that the majority of

people had an idea that Co-operative Stores were only associated with the selling of goods over the counter. An exhibition, therefore, gave an indication of what the larger movement was, and in the direction it was tending. This particular event was held by the Co-operative Wholesale Society jointly with the local Dursley Store, and represented mainly the productive departments of the Wholesale Society. Needless to say, the products were a fine example of what was being done by collective effort under model conditions.

That old pioneer, Mr. J. Clay, then a Director of the Co-operative Wholesale Society, was present and gave one of his best speeches. Mr. Clay at that time had been forty years in the movement.

In the following winter of 1899-90 the same Committee carried out a very useful programme. A series of lectures was held at Cainscross and the Branches. Mr. Embrey, the County Analyst, gave one at Cainscross on "Food and its Adulteration;" Mr. Iggulden, under the auspices of the County Council, gave two on "Gardening;" Mr. Howman lectured on "Soils and Manures," and Mr. James Harper gave two lectures on "Fruit and Vegetable Drying." But the most successful event of the season was the holding of the first children's tea party. This was a happy idea, and proved to be the forerunner of many similar events. "Interest the children, and the children will be sure to talk most of what they are interested in;" and in this particular instance the Stores were sure of receiving much attention. Children are very communicative, and it is very probable that much of the seed sown at this time has since borne excellent fruit.

In the season 1900-1901 a more extensive programme was arranged. There were classes for bookkeeping at Cainscross and Nailsworth, also cookery and singing classes at Cainscross. Mr. James Harper was the conductor of the singing class, and through his efforts a very successful class was got together. Children's parties again came in for special attention, several of which were held during the winter. But in this programme the

primary work of catering for the adults was not forgotten. A series of public meetings was held in connection with each place of business, and it spoke volumes for the enthusiasm of the local Co-operators that a crowded audience was easily secured. The Educational Committee was responsible for these meetings, and at some of them the speakers were drawn from among themselves. This was particularly the case at Dursley. Here Mr. James Harper gave his first Co-operative speech, but he showed himself a thorough master of his subject. He dealt chiefly with the evils of competition, and how these may be avoided by the system of Co-operation, the result being that men's lives may be made easier, happier, and nobler. At the Wotton meeting Mr. Clay was again a welcome speaker, and with his broad smile and cheery words obtained, as he always did, ready listeners. On this occasion he made reference to the earlier Store, and was glad that Cainscross had come to them after their old Store had gone. This was the last time that Mr. Clay spoke for the Society at its meetings.

A programme of work similar in character was drawn up and carried out in the winter of 1901-2. There were classes in ambulance, bookkeeping, and singing respectively, each of which had a satisfactory number of students, and were carried through with good results. Children's parties were again a feature, and of these there were five great gatherings; the season's work being finally wound up with a concert.

The Educational Committee had, up to the beginning of the winter session of 1902, been in existence four years, and some useful work had been done. That body, however, decided that the time had arrived for it to be placed upon a different footing. The Committee had been elected annually at the November meetings, but had not otherwise been responsible to the Quarterly Meetings, only drawing what funds they required through the sanction of the General Committee. It would appear, however, that Co-operative education on the lines of holding classes and lectures was not very popular with some, and the idea of asking for a separate fund to carry

on the work was misconstrued, hence there was much opposition to the proposal. This ended in the Committee deciding to discontinue their work; consequently, very little of an educational character was done in this winter. Since then all work of this kind has been done through the General Committee, and no winter has gone by without meetings of some kind being held. In the winter of 1907-8 six children's tea parties were held—one for each place of business—and at all of them a crowded room of children was the result. The expenditure on these children's events has, in the opinion of people in a position to judge, been amply justified.

CHILDREN'S FETES.

The Society's propaganda work was kept well to the fore during 1911. In the early part of the year public meetings were held at Stonehouse and Wotton-under-Edge. In the summer a new method of interesting the children was adopted by the holding of outdoor fêtes at Cainscross and Dursley. In the past the children's tea meetings had shown that the surest way to appeal to human nature was through the children. Through these events the Society will doubtless derive considerable benefit in the years to come. Both the fêtes created no little stir in the respective townships, and were highly successful.



CHAPTER XIV.

Continuous Progress—1897-1900.

CAINSCROSS EXTENSIONS—MINOR MATTERS—DEATH OF MR. JOSEPH WEARE—RULES AGAIN—DEATH OF MR. WARNER—MR. BROOKS—BAKERY EXTENSIONS—CAINSCROSS EXHIBITION—OLD-AGE PENSIONS.

Year.	Trade.		Capital		Members.		Average Dividend.
	£		£				s. d.
1897	39,601	...	16,069	...	1,701	...	2 6 $\frac{3}{4}$
1898	42,229	...	17,618	...	1,833	...	2 6
1899	45,410	...	19,012	...	2,029	...	2 6
1900	48,918	...	20,612	...	2,192	...	2 6

AS these figures indicate, this period was one of continuous progress, and it soon became necessary to carry out extensive alterations at Cainscross. With the growth of business the available space was far from adequate. The premises had been erected for Grocery only, and gradually altered as the business extended; but no definite scheme had been followed with any regard to the future. Indeed, it had never been anticipated that the Society would grow so rapidly, and as a consequence much of the shop space was altogether unsuitable for the purposes required. The extensions proposed would provide additional room for the Drapery and new quarters for the Butchering Department. The Boot Department took the space vacated by the Butchering, and accommodation was given to Ironmongery. An Outfitting Department was installed in a room which had previously been used by the Secretary and for Committee meetings. An additional room was built over the old

Grocery order room to serve as a Furniture Department. The cellars were lowered, certain walls removed, and double the amount of space given for grocery purposes. Another part of the scheme raised the rear portion of the old "Golden Cross" building a storey higher, giving a room for the Secretary's work and the Committee meetings, and a Manager's office. It was estimated that the cost would be £600, but the actual outlay was about £1,000. Messrs. Wheatley Brothers (of Stroud) carried out the alterations.

The Butchering Department was a source of trouble to the Committee during 1897, and the profits were so unsatisfactory that the ordinary expenses could not be met. It is clear that this was a question of management, and although the Committee were loth to make a change it eventually had to be done.

Two other districts were brought within the area of the Society's operations during this year, namely, Uley and Avening, which were served respectively from Dursley and Nailsworth.

The shops at Cainscross had a narrow escape from fire shortly before the extensions were completed. Somehow a gas pipe had been perforated by a nail, and gas accumulated in the ceiling of the Butchering Department. This found its way into the bedroom of the adjoining cottage, and when a lamp was taken upstairs an explosion took place. A flame then ran back into the shop, and, with the gas leakage there, set fire to the ceiling. Fortunately the night was not far advanced, and the people that were passing saw the light before it got a firm hold.

The Annual Meeting of 1898 was marked by a keen competition for office. Mr. Joseph Weare had two opponents for the Presidency, but in this, which proved to be his last election, he secured 318 votes, to 115 for Mr. Collins, and 48 for Mr. Miles. There were six candidates for two seats on the Committee; of these Mr. R. M. Warner headed the poll. Mr. B. S. Hill was elected a member of the Board as representative for

Dursley at this meeting, a position which he holds to the present time.

Arising out of a question at the Annual Meeting an inquiry was made by the Committee as to the starting of a productive factory by the Co-operative Wholesale Society in the neighbourhood. A number of circular letters were sent to West of England Societies asking for support for the idea, but the project was not taken up.

By the death of Mr. Weare in April, 1898, the Society lost a leader and a sincere friend. He was the last of the official pioneers, and is still remembered by many for his long and active service in connection with the Society. He had stood by the Society for thirty-five years, during which time he served fifteen years as a member of the Committee and five as President. He was a man in whom one could place implicit confidence, and whose one idea in life was to be of service and act honourably. It was Mr. Weare's pleasure and privilege to see the Society through all its difficulties, and live to be its President in the eventide of his life, by which time the Society had reached the height of its prosperity.

At the Quarterly Meeting in May, 1898, another alteration was deemed necessary in the rules. Hitherto a candidate could be nominated for both the office of President and Committee, and in case he should be defeated for the former he could still be elected for the latter. The amended rule henceforth called upon a Committee-man first to resign his seat before he could be nominated for President. This was another principle embodied in the rules, but before the year was out the members again sought to change the constitution. A feeling prevailed that the introduction of new men on the Committee might be conducive to the Society's best interests. The average man could not understand why the same individuals were being retained in office year after year, and as changes did not appear to be made by the mere operation of the vote, it was sought to effect this by an alteration in the rules. Accordingly, a requisition was sent in, signed by the necessary twenty members, calling a Special

Meeting for the purpose. The proposal was to the effect "that a member of the Committee after serving four consecutive years should not be eligible until twelve months had elapsed." The meeting was held in November, 1898. Mr. H. Dangerfield was the mover of the resolution to embody the paragraph in the rules, and Mr. D. May the seconder. There was an animated discussion, but the motion was lost by a majority of twenty-four.

The President, Mr. Warner, died early in February, 1899; thus the Society lost two Presidents by death within the space of ten months. Mr. Warner had sat continuously on the Committee from the Annual Meeting of 1888. He was a hard worker, and his full sympathies were always extended towards those in need of them. He took office when the Society was only marking time, and when there was plenty of work to be done. Mr. Warner passed away in the prime of life, and both the Society and employees lost a valuable friend.

At the Annual Meeting which took place a few days after Mr. Warner's death another vacancy occurred on the Board through the retirement of Mr. G. Brooks. Altogether Mr. Brooks had served some fifteen years on the Board, four of which was as Chairman of Committee. He exerted at all times an important influence in the councils of the Society. He had a ready grasp of the business, and in his conclusions was generous to a fault. He first became a Co-operator by joining the older Stroud Society in 1870, but a few months before it was dissolved. It was some years later before he had the courage to become a member at Cainscross, but the decision once taken the Society gained a good advocate and an ardent worker.

From the vacancies thus created Mr. W. Collins was elected to the Presidency, and Messrs. D. May and G. Dauncey were elected on the Committee.

The Society's bread trade, which in 1884 was under 1,000 quarterns, was now in 1899 represented by an average output of 8,000 quarterns per week, and the time had come for further extensions at Cainscross. The Central

Bakery was originally a one-oven affair, hemmed in by other buildings. Every alteration, therefore, was of a more costly character than it would otherwise have been had the ground been clear. This time a larger view was taken, in order that the business might freely develop without further extensions being necessary for some time to come.

The scheme submitted to the Quarterly Meeting provided for taking down some stables in order to widen the bakehouse, and raising the roof of the whole building. The erection of a new drawplate oven was included in the scheme, and it cost between £700 to £800.

When these alterations were completed the reopening was made the occasion for arranging an exhibition at Cainscross. Two of the Branches had been favoured by the holding of Co-operative exhibitions, with beneficial results; it was, therefore, fitting that a similar exhibition should be held at the parent Store.

This took place on November 24th and 25th, and a British nobleman was invited to open the exhibition and take a part in the day's proceedings. Earl Grey, who previously and since has been identified with things Co-operative, honoured the locality by this visit; and all who were present were greatly pleased with his open, frank, and unassuming manner, together with his earnest advocacy of the higher principles of the cause. Mr. Collins was the Chairman of the opening ceremony, and besides the Committee and officials with him were Mr. Jos. Clay, Mr. Alfred Apperly, Mr. Vivian, and Mr. Kimmins. Earl Grey, in his speech, soon won the appreciative interest of his audience. He dealt with all phases of the movement, and in one part said, "I am satisfied that the Co-operative movement offers an ideal to inspire the energies of all practical men. That Co-operation goes to the root of the poverty of the poor man is plain to most. It appeals to the deepest feeling of human natures, and though it was not known in its present form when Queen Victoria came to the throne, it is now a power in the land." Dealing with the exhibition, he said "it was

full of interesting objects, and the factories and workshops which produced them are all worked and owned by working men. Nearly all, in fact quite all, except the Wholesale Society's products are based on the principle of co-partnership, which means that after capital has had its fit reward, labour takes its share of the surplus profits, and invests them in each concern."

Mr. Apperly (now Sir Alfred) made a few remarks following the Earl's speech, and expressed his pleasure in being a member of the Cainscross Store, and said "that he had been surprised to find the amount of good it was doing."

The exhibits were thoroughly representative of the principal productive institutions, and some of the products included needles, pottery, soap, tobacco, flour, boots, clothing, hosiery, printing, and bakery goods, all of British manufacture. Two German Societies, from Hamburg and Bonn on the Rhine respectively, sent representative goods. There was also a collection of interesting products from the Cosme Co-operative Association in Paraguay, South America.

At a luncheon given to the visitors co-partnership came in for much attention; and it was refreshing to have the Vicar of Cainscross's appreciation of Co-operative work. When he thought of the downtrodden poor, he said, he thanked God for the good work the Co-operative Societies had done. There were a number of speeches at this function, and among others there were speeches from Earl Grey, Messrs. H. Vivian, J. Clay, H. Ballard (of Kettering), Nott, G. F. Payne, and Jacob.

The second day was given over to a monster public tea, when over 700 sat down. This was followed by a great meeting in the room over the bakery. At this meeting Mr E. O. Greening (of London) gave one of his racy speeches, indicative of all that leads to progress, light, and advancement of the human family's welfare.

The 1899 trading results showed an increase of over £3,000, and by the end of the year the share capital reached the sum of £19,012, with a membership of 2,029. The bread trade showed great expansion over the whole of

the Society's area, the increase in quarters for the year being 37,577.

In February, 1900, there was another change in the Presidency by reason of Mr. Collins leaving the neighbourhood. Mr. Collins' length of service on the Board was of comparatively short duration, but in that time he had gained a thorough grasp of the principles of the movement, and became one of its strongest advocates. Mr. Timothy Miles was elected the new President, a position which he still holds, with credit to himself and the Society. Mr. A. Underwood was elected as the new Stonehouse representative on the Committee.

During 1900 there was a lull in the extensions, but the Society was nevertheless reaping the advantages of those which had been carried out in the previous year. As a consequence there was a considerable growth in the surplus capital, which had to be invested outside the business. The sum of £1,000 was invested in Government local loan stock, and rather over £1,000 in the share and loan account of the Co-operative Wholesale Society. A dividend of 2s. 6d. in the £ was paid throughout the year, in addition to considerable sums allowed for extra depreciation—the amount under this head being £190; while Stroud Hospital received its first donation from the Society.

Electric lighting on a modified scale was installed at Cainscross during the year.

There were also a number of changes in the staff, the chief of which were in the Butchering and Outfitting Departments. The number of employees at this time was 57.

Old-age pensions were long talked about before the Government evolved the present beneficial scheme. Co-operators gave the matter much consideration, and during 1900 the Co-operative Union had a scheme for Co-operators. At the November Quarterly Meeting this was brought before the members, and dealt with in detail by the Chairman, Mr. Miles. The scheme involved a contribution by the Society of 8s. per annum per member, and the pension allowance provided for a payment of

7s. 6d. per week to each member on attaining a certain age. The matter was adjourned to a special meeting, and finally rejected.

The trading results for 1900 were as equally satisfactory as those of the previous year. There were increases in trade at every Branch, that in bread being 33,362 quarterns.



THE TURNPIKE, ULEY.



CHAPTER XV.

Matters of Moment—1901-4.

A BRIGHT FUTURE—CAPITAL AND INTEREST—DECENTRALISATION
— A DURSLEY TROUBLE — DEPRECIATION — SYSTEM OF
BRANCH MEETINGS—CRITICISM AND RESIGNATIONS—NEW
OVENS AT STONEHOUSE—A HOUSING QUESTION—A DIVIDEND
AND INTEREST QUESTION.

THE twentieth century opened with great promise for the working classes of the land. The previous century had seen the birth of many great movements and reforms, but not the least important had been the right to associate for mutual purposes, from which had arisen the establishment of Co-operative Societies. These Societies had learnt wisdom in the school of experience. Most of them were no longer weak and struggling; their work was recognised and appreciated by the community. The only question for Co-operators was how far and in what manner the benefits of Co-operation might be extended to other districts where the movement had not yet appeared. This was the problem which now faced Co-operators in the mid-division of Gloucestershire.

The Society had opened four Branches. Each one had become a success; and coincident with the Branch success the Store at Cainscross continued to increase in sales and membership at a greater rate than at any period of its previous history. In ten years the annual sales had gone up from £16,739 to £48,918, which was no mean achievement in a district where the population was of a stationary character.

The increasing prosperity of the Society brought with it certain problems concerning capital and interest, and before these were finally settled a rather strong feeling was engendered among the members. There was a time when the Society had too little capital, but the years of success had brought too much; in a sense, the Society was becoming too rich. To many that probably appeared a desirable state of things, and, so far as the mere increase of capital went, that was so. But when the surplus capital had to be re-invested at a lower rate of interest than the Society paid to its members, then the difference was a tax on trade. The share capital at this time was close upon £21,000, of which over £7,000 was invested outside the business at an average rate of $3\frac{1}{4}$ per cent, and, as the Society paid 5 per cent to its members, there was a loss on the invested portion of over £100 per annum. Perhaps to some this did not appear a serious matter, but there was a question of equity involved.

It is one of the unfortunate results of civilisation that the rich grow richer at the expense of the poorer members of the community. In a Co-operative body, however, such should not be possible. All should be working for equal advantages and equal opportunities. There are all classes of people in the movement—people in different stations of life, some well-off in this world's goods, and some who have a difficulty to make both ends meet; some who would save money on any wages, however little, and others who would not, whatever income they received. This being so, the small investor with little capital in the Society should not have to make an increased profit in order that the man with a large capital should receive more interest than what the market rate allows.

The largest holders of capital are not necessarily the best purchasers, or the best members, but it often happens that some of the best Co-operators are those in possession of little capital. Out of a total membership of 2,252 at that time 170 members held half the capital in the Society. This meant that nine-tenths of the membership through their trade were providing a safe investment at good interest for the other tenth, and their share in the profit as dividend upon trade was less than it might have been had a fair market rate of interest been paid upon capital. Such were the considerations that prompted the Committee to take action with the view to a reduction in the rate of interest.

As this was a matter that equally affected the Stroud Society, a conference was arranged between the two Committees, with the result that it was mutually agreed to recommend to the Quarterly Meetings that the rate of interest on capital up to £100 should be $4\frac{1}{8}$ per cent, or 10d. in the £. At the Quarterly Meeting of May, 1901, this recommendation was put before the members, and, after some considerable discussion, an amendment was carried by thirty-two votes to twenty-nine limiting the rate of 10d. in the £ to sums up to £50, with a lesser rate beyond. A majority of three on an attendance of sixty-one was hardly conclusive enough for 2,252 members to abide by—at any rate, that was the opinion of many; and before a week had gone by a requisition was signed by the necessary number of members calling for a Special Meeting to reconsider the question.

The Special Meeting was held a month later, when there was a crowded assembly. The Chairman (Mr. Miles) explained the purport of the meeting, also the effect of the amendment passed at the last meeting, which was now known as the "Dangerfield" resolution. Mr. S. Wyatt (of Stonehouse) moved that this resolution should be rescinded, and he had many supporters. Mr. Dangerfield, however, did not propose to let his motion go without a fight, and he took up a strong attitude in pleading for the poorer members. His contention was that the interest paid should not exceed the rate received

on well-secured investments; to pay more would in reality be a tax upon the goods sold. An opinion of the other side was that those with capital were old members, who took risks when the Society had its difficulties in the early days, and were entitled to a fair interest. Mr. A. Lydeard was one of these, and he further reminded the meeting that the young members were reaping the benefit of what others had sown. The vote, which was by ballot, restored the Committee's original recommendation by a majority of eighty-eight.

The controversy over the rules was not without its object-lesson. Co-operative institutions above everything else are supposed to be democratic, and equal power and opportunity is expected to apply to every section of the membership. But in this trouble on the question of interest on capital it had been shown that in at least one essential this was not the case. The Cainscross members, in going beyond the Committee's recommendation, did not carry the Branch members with them, and it was evident that if the latter had had equal opportunity of being present at the first meeting the voting would have been of a different character. Up to this time the Cainscross meeting was the only one that counted, and if Branch members wished to exercise a voice in the government of the Society they had to come to Cainscross for the purpose. On account of the distance this was a great inconvenience and expense to most of them, but in particular to those resident in the Dursley and Wotton-under-Edge areas. The natural sequence was to find a remedy for this apparent grievance, and the Committee recommended an alteration of rule, giving to Branch Quarterly Meetings the same rights and powers as those exercised at Cainscross, and this the members passed.

A Co-operative Society, like any other business firm, has sometimes unforeseen difficulties to deal with, and such a one presented itself at Dursley in the latter half of 1901. It appears that the heat from the ovens was carried through the wall of the bakehouse to the injury of a bacon curer's cellar, which was on the other side. Ovens for bread and bacon curing can hardly be said to be in



PARSONAGE STREET, DURSLEY.
Showing the Society's Premises
on the right.



NO. 3 BRANCH BAKERY, NAILSWORTH.



No. 2 BRANCH, DURSLEY (GROCERY, DRAPERY, AND BOOTS).

agreement, and the result was that the Society was involved in the payment of some compensation for injury; but that was not all, for in the end the ovens had to be removed. A new bakehouse had to be built, but, in view of the fact that the Society's lease had only a few years to run, this was built as cheaply as possible, and when completed the ovens were therein rebuilt. The total expenditure was about £150.

About this time the opportunity presented itself of acquiring the Nailsworth shop premises, which up to then had been held upon a lease. The Committee, therefore, decided to purchase at an agreed price of £550, which the Quarterly Meeting following approved. In this year, too, the King Stanley Branch was opened. The trading results for 1901 were excellent in many ways, good progress being made at every place of business. And, while there had been a considerable number of transfers from Cainscross to the new King Stanley Branch, the increase shown at the Central was £1,957 on the year. In the bread trade the increase was 48,459 quarterns. In the matter of finance equally good progress was shown, and there was the usual dividend of 2s. 6d., with ample sums set aside for depreciation and reserve.

The Annual Meeting of 1902 was notable for the new spirit of criticism which began and continued throughout the whole of the year. On this occasion there was criticism on the report, and some personalities were indulged in. One member took exception to the allocation of profit, and moved an amendment that the £50 set down for extra depreciation be deleted, "as, in his opinion, the Society was doing too much for posterity." Needless to say, the meeting upheld the Committee's proposal. Mr. A. Lydeard (a pioneer) referred to depreciation and reserve as the two bulwarks in the foundation of the Society. Doubtless many members at different times have looked upon these matters with a none too kindly eye. The history of this Society will prove that it is the one system and the one policy by which the Society has provided for itself such strong foundations. A hand-to-mouth policy is always a weak one, which, if persisted

in, will inevitably lead to difficulties. In March there was a change of Branch Managers at Dursley. Mr. Clutterbuck, who had been in charge at Dursley since the Branch was opened, left the Society's employ. Mr. C. Davis was transferred to the vacant position, and Mr. G. Thomas appointed to Wotton-under-Edge.

Coming to the matter of Branch Quarterly Meetings, it may be noted that by the alteration of the rule recently passed the calling of these meetings was vested in the hands of the General Committee, and they finally decided to put the rule into force in November, 1902. Meetings were therefore announced for each village where a Branch was situate. The agenda on this occasion contained a proposal from the Committee "that $\frac{3}{4}$ per cent of the profits be set aside for educational work," and another from a private member "that the Committee's fees be doubled." There were others, but it was upon these two that interest chiefly centred itself. It was evident from the subsequent discussion that the principle of holding Branch Meetings and giving them equal power with Cainscross was not viewed upon by members at the Central in a favourable light. The power held at one centre had now to be shared with the other component parts of the Society, and, although this may be democracy, there were many who could not understand the adoption of the principle in the constitution of the Society.

Each Branch had its meeting, and, while most of them did not call for any special comment, those held at Cainscross and King Stanley were marked by very large attendances. At Cainscross when the balance sheet was opened for discussion one member wanted to know if it had been passed at the Branches, and, if so, there was no use discussing it here. The same member also took exception to the words "much pleasure" being at the beginning of the Committee's report. There was much adverse criticism at this meeting, but the real bone of contention was that dealing with the Educational Committee, and the line taken was that it was not of a representative character.

Taking the combined vote of all the meetings, the proposal to make a grant to this Committee had, however, a majority in favour, but in view of the attitude taken the Educational Committee decided to relinquish office in a body. The proposal to increase the Committee's fees was not even put at Cainscross. During the meeting a number of insinuations were made, and impertinent questions asked about the Committee, which were deeply resented. As a consequence, five members of the Committee forthwith resigned their seats on the Board, viz., Messrs. A. J. Hoskins, D. May, W. Orton, G. Hurst, and A. Underwood. This incident occurred at the close of the meeting, which broke up in disorder, after lasting three hours. Immediately afterwards a Special Meeting was called for by requisition, and took place three weeks later at Cainscross. The Chairman (Mr. Miles), in opening the meeting, asked for a true Co-operative spirit to rule. There was now a need for Co-operators to stand together, and if this was done no outside force could injure the Society. The danger, if any, would come from within.

At the conclusion of the Chairman's remarks a vote of confidence was moved in reference to the five Committee-men who had resigned, with a hope that they would continue in office until the Annual Meeting. A considerable amount of discussion followed. The resolution, however, was voted upon by ballot, with the result that 55 were in favour and 57 against. There was no option, therefore, but to leave matters until the Annual Meeting. In the meantime the Board consisted of three members of Committee, with the Chairman.

As a further outcome of the trouble a Special Committee was appointed to revise the rules. This consisted of four private members, together with the existing Committee and officers.

After these meetings the strong feeling which had been engendered simmered down somewhat, but as the time of the annual election came round the interest was keenly manifested. The recent meetings had revealed new leaders, and, with six vacancies, here was a chance for office that did not often occur. Three of these vacancies

were at Cainscross, for which nine nominations were sent in.

The Cainscross meeting—that hardy annual—was perhaps more hardy than ever this year, and the way the members crowded into the room was such a sight as had not been seen for years. Something lively was expected, and doubtless many thought they were in for a good time. The meeting, however, was carried through in an excellent spirit. The report showed how the Society had climbed another rung of the ladder of success, with sales for the year of £54,516, share capital of £23,287, and 2,460 members. The profit distributed in the year was £6,570; and the wage bill for 64 employees came to £3,343.

The Chairman paid a neat compliment to the Educational Committee for their work, more particularly in connection with the children's tea parties, which had been so successful. Very much good humour prevailed in the meeting, members making the most of their opportunity to ask all manner of questions, some of which, being replied to from the body of the hall without a lead from the platform, afforded great amusement.

Competition for office brought four new men on the Board in Messrs. G. Dauncey, J. Bennett, Edward Smith, and A. Barrett.

The Special Committee appointed to revise the rules submitted their report at the May Quarterly Meeting, and an entirely new set of rules was recommended. The principle of Branch meetings and representation was, however, again embodied in the rules; and the whole of them were passed as recommended.

NEW OVENS AT STONEHOUSE.

The principal business extension during 1903 was at Stonehouse. Through the increase in the bread sales the ovens there had become too small, and extensions to the bakehouse itself had become very necessary.

This work was commenced in the early part of the year, and involved the erection of new stables, enlargement of the bakery, and the building of a two-decker oven. The

cost of these was between £500 and £600. The opening took place in July, with a tea and entertainment. Mr. R. H. Tutt came down from London to address the meeting. His speech was worthy of the occasion. Co-operation, he said, was the only movement which had an "open door," and the only doctrine they preached was published on the front page of the *Economist*:

Let each man find his own in all men's good,
And all men work in noble brotherhood.

In addition to purely trading transactions a Co-operative Committee has many things to discuss, although some of the subjects may be of a subsidiary character; and probably the question of housing may be so considered. In this neighbourhood the housing problem cannot by any means be considered an acute one; yet there is a natural desire among the thrifty class, when the nature of employment is reasonably steady, to become possessed of the houses they live in.

The Society has always had a sympathy with this desire, believing that its fulfilment is essentially a Co-operative duty. In 1904 a plot of land suitable for cottage building, and situated in Foxmoor, Ebley, was offered for sale. At the August Quarterly Meeting the Committee submitted the question of purchase for the members' consideration. To Mr. May was delegated the duty of explaining the conditions, and the kind of house it would be necessary to build. The meeting was a fairly representative one, and the matter was well discussed. Mr. J. R. Pearson proved a strong advocate of the principle of buying land for the members. In his opinion this was one of the most important questions for Co-operators to undertake, *i.e.*, the proper housing of the working classes. There were others who supported the idea of members buying their own houses, in which case the Society would advance upon mortgage the greater part of the money required. In view of the restrictions on the land in question, there was, however, a majority of 30 against its purchase.

Such a decision had its effect upon future policy, and henceforth the Society became lenders, instead of undertaking the purchase of land to build houses; which at best would probably have been somewhat speculative.

For the March quarter of 1904 the dividend was raised to 2s. 7d., which, in view of the maintenance of a standard dividend of 2s. 6d. for many years, was in a sense exceptional, and at the Quarterly Meeting it furnished the chief topic for discussion. The opposition—and there was usually one at that time—favoured the dividend being brought down to a point much below the standard at which it had been kept, and with the surplus to make a general reduction in the prices of everyday selling articles to a proportionate extent. The Board, however, defended the policy of paying the dividend to which they had been accustomed, as in their opinion it was conducive to greater thrift, and made for a greater increase of capital within the movement.

The questions of capital, interest, and prices are ever uppermost in the discussions at Co-operative meetings, and with the varied and complex minds that go to make up a Co-operative institution there must necessarily be many and varied opinions. Some do not see even the necessity of keeping money in the Society beyond the needs of the business. The payment of interest is often judged from the standpoint of whether or not one has any capital to invest; and in regard to prices, most people naturally desire these a little lower than they happen to be.

During this year a prominent speaker at the meetings often raised the point that the rate of interest on capital was too high, and on one occasion paid the neat compliment of contending that, as the Society was as safe as the Government, the interest paid should be no higher than the $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent paid on Government securities. To do more was putting a tax upon the prices of the goods sold.

In ten years the increase of surplus capital had been

upwards of £12,000, but this had been so invested that the interest received was now practically equivalent to that paid upon the members' capital.

Year.	Sales.		Share Capital.		Dividend.		Members.
	£		£		£		
1901	53,303	...	22,072	...	6,438	...	2,374
1902	54,516	...	23,287	...	6,570	...	2,460
1903	59,208	...	24,442	...	7,088	...	2,517
1904	62,178	...	26,138	...	7,584	...	2,683





CHAPTER XVI.

Still Progressive—1905-8.

APATHY—A CONFERENCE ON WAGES—DEATH OF MR. W. COLE—
PRESS OPINION—STONEHOUSE BRANCH—IMPROVED POSITION
—A DURSLEY MATTER.

IN the years 1905-6 a depression in trade was experienced throughout the country, although in this neighbourhood it was not of the same intensity as in the North of England. The Cainscross district, however, did not escape wholly from its influence, and the same progress could not be maintained as in previous years. The increases for a time were therefore smaller, but in no other way was the depression felt.

The Quarterly Meeting of August, 1905, approved the action of the Committee in purchasing for £300 a plot of freehold land, with stables thereon. This is situated at Cainscross, and has now been utilised for the erection of new shops and hall.

In this year the members had begun to show an apathy towards the proceedings of the Quarterly Meetings, which became more marked in subsequent years. Of the six meetings called on this particular occasion two had to be abandoned. One was informally held; and at another some of the Committee had to be counted in order to make up the ten members required to form a quorum.

There were few developments during 1905. These comprised, besides the Nailsworth Bakery, the opening up of Haresfield, where a meeting was held and a fair number of new members were thus added to the Stonehouse Branch. A small adjoining district was also linked up to Dursley. At Cainscross a change was made in the Outfitting Department by the appointment of Mr. Horscroft.

The increase of trade in this year was £2,382, and, although smaller than usual, it was satisfactory to note that the increase came not so much from the addition of new members as from the increased spendings of the older portion of the membership.

The Gloucester and Hereford Co-operative Association, with which the Society had again become affiliated, held an important Conference at Cainscross in June, 1906. A paper in two parts was given entitled, "Wages, Pensions, and Conditions of Labour." Part I. dealt chiefly with the wages paid within the movement, and was of general interest to the Co-operative employee. It was brought out that the actual wages paid within the movement were no better upon the average than were paid for similar positions outside. That the standard of pay for shop assistants was altogether too low. The calling required respectability; a period of some five years as apprenticeship at nominal wages was also demanded. The youth had to dress fairly well, and the duties he was called upon to discharge were of such a character as to require integrity, patience, forbearance, and polite address. Yet, at the end of his term, he could only secure the wages of an unskilled labourer, about 18s. per week. Such were the points mentioned; and Conferences on such a subject have doubtless had their influence in making the conditions of service in the Store approximate towards the principles for which the movement stands.

This Society has ever had at its command the services of an intelligent and capable staff, whom the Committee have always endeavoured to treat in a generous spirit.

The increase in trade during 1906 was £2,329, and in other directions there was general progress. A standard

dividend of 2s. 6d. was paid throughout the year. Share capital had increased to £29,196, which was an increase of £1,506; and considering that no deposits are accepted on share accounts, beyond the additions to the dividends, this increase represented a substantial saving to the members.

The financial position of the Society had been further safeguarded by the policy of liberal depreciation, no less a sum than £683 having been credited to this fund during the year, one result being that the surplus capital was considerably augmented; but as numerous applications were received for loans upon mortgage, a profitable outlet was thus provided. The total capital held in the Society at the end of 1906 was £36,084; of this £17,328 was invested outside the business at an average interest of nearly 4 per cent, and £18,656 was used for trade purposes. Beyond an improvement in the Cainscross bakery, at a cost of £80, practically nothing was done in the way of extensions during 1906.

A tea and meeting held at Nailsworth in the December following was the only gathering of its kind in that winter; and the speakers were the President, and Messrs. D. May and G. Dauncey. In referring to the extension of Co-operation to Nailsworth, Mr. Miles reminded the audience that Co-operators were imbued with that kind of spirit of unselfishness which we admire so much in insects. These little creatures do not adopt the selfish attitude in respect to food in their wanderings, but were always very eager to make known their find to others, so that the good things might be enjoyed by all their friends. That was the kind of spirit which had brought Co-operation to Nailsworth, where the Branch had been started eleven years previously with forty-six members and a weekly trade of £25, and had now reached a membership of 466, with an average trade of £151 per week.

On March 12th, 1907, the Society lost a faithful friend by the death of Mr. William Cole, who passed away after a brief illness. Mr. Cole was well known to the members, and particularly to those connected with the

Stonehouse Branch. He was elected on the Committee as the representative for Stonehouse in 1889, and served, with the exception of a break of twelve months, until 1902. During the time he was on the Board he had the satisfaction of seeing the Society's trade increase four-fold—from £12,988 to £53,302 per annum—and the opening of all the Branches excepting the one he represented. Mr. Cole was a most conscientious worker, generous-hearted, and ever anxious to do his best to further the Society's interests. His home at Eastington is about five miles from Cainscross, and this distance Mr. Cole walked to and fro during the whole time he served on the Board.

PRESS OPINION.

The local press has many interests to serve, and it may sometimes occur, in the anxiety to please all sections, that an erroneous view may be taken of the movement. In April, 1907, a prominent Co-operator was elected on one of the local public bodies, and through his position on the list of successful candidates one of the local editors was tempted to enter the lists of Co-operator critics. He said:—"We have no fault to find with the principle on which the Co-operative movement is founded. Yet we cannot close our eyes to the fact that the building up of a huge trading concern of this kind—which, if not exactly a monopoly, is certainly a combine of the most effective type—is having a highly prejudicial effect upon the smaller retail tradesman." This gentleman's fear seemed chiefly concerned with the rates, but there was really no need for this. Should the extension of the movement mean the disappearance of the private shop-keeper, it does not follow that less trade will be done. After all, the shops of a Co-operative Society have rates levied upon them exactly the same as those belonging to the private individual; and the equitable adjustment of rates is a matter with which the common sense of the community can be relied upon to deal.

In the third quarter of 1907 the Society had the best increase in sales on record, and the profits were of a

corresponding character. Out of the profits of this quarter, after paying the 2s. 6d. dividend, a sum of £40 was added to the reserve fund. With a remaining surplus of £92 it was resolved to provide a new van, a boiler for the bakehouse, and allow for the expenses of a series of children's parties during the winter. The first of these parties was held at Stonehouse in October, as a coming of age celebration for that Branch.

Stonehouse Branch was opened in 1886, and it could be said that the success achieved here had been satisfactory to the Committee and members alike. When the Branch was opened the number of members of the whole Society was only 321, with annual sales amounting to £5,995. At this time Stonehouse alone had 481 members, with sales exceeding £11,000 a year. The gathering was successful, both from the number of children at the tea, and the crowded audience of adults and children afterwards.

Mr. Golightly (of London) gave an excellent speech, dealing with the trades carried on by the Wholesale Societies. He said he would like to see the manufacture of West of England cloth taken up locally, where the mills could be run by the people.

In November of this year Mr. William Clutterbuck (of Stonehouse) passed away. He was one of the last of the band of pioneers. Mr. Clutterbuck had not served on the Board, but he was a genial figure, and a constant attendant at the Quarterly Meetings up to a few years before his death. He was at all times a staunch supporter and a willing advocate of his own Society. His son was the first Manager of the Dursley Branch.

The year 1907 was essentially a good one for the Society. The sales had shown a greater increase than for many years past, and generally the members had been more loyal to the Store, as shown by a considerable increase in the average spendings per member. The share capital had £1,500 more to its credit on the year's working, and the Society had shown its usefulness by advancing loans upon mortgage to an increasing number of its members. The share and loan investments increased on the year

by £1,513, and now showed a total of £13,771. By these investments, which provided an outlet for its surplus capital, the Society linked itself with other organisations founded upon the Co-operative principle (the chief of which was the Co-operative Wholesale Society), and, to a lesser degree, a considerable number of the productive institutions.

The Society was thus materially assisting the Co-operative cause by providing capital for such concerns. At the end of the year there were 2,947 members, of which 2,030 were at the Branches.

The Gloucester and Hereford Association was not backward in the holding of conferences. Two were held at Cainscross within a year, and papers read on the subjects of depreciation, reserve funds, and Store management. The holding of such conferences is certainly of much value to Co-operative Committee-men, for the interchange of ideas cannot fail to be of service in the discharge of their duties. From this it may be inferred that long service on the Board has its advantages to the Society.

It had been evident for some years that the premises held upon a lease at Dursley were becoming too small for the business, and it was realised that if any extensions had to be made it would be unwise to carry them out on property which belonged to someone else. It was therefore decided that a site should be purchased where new premises could be erected suitable to the needs of Dursley. With this end in view some property, situated in Parsonage Street, was purchased in 1904. About this time Messrs. R. A. Lister and Co. made great developments in their business, and more labour was brought into the town. Then the business of the Branch began to expand at a greater rate than at any period since it was opened. With a few years of the existing lease still to run, a waiting policy was adopted, as it became evident that the site purchased was not altogether an ideal one, having regard to the greater potentialities for Co-operation in this district.

In 1907, however, the members began to agitate at their Quarterly Meetings for increased facilities at their

Branch. There was a demand for new departments, such as drapery, boots, and outfitting. The similar departments at Cainscross were all right in a way, but on account of the distance, were inconvenient and unable to satisfy the wants of the local members. In view of these demands the Committee decided, in 1908, to prepare plans for the erection of premises on the site already purchased, and at the August Quarterly Meeting a preliminary scheme was submitted to the members. Before the scheme was put into operation a site much more suitable came into the market, which, after some negotiations, was finally purchased. New plans were drawn up, and the building of the present commodious premises commenced in the following year.

At the November Quarterly Meeting the Chairman made reference to the death of Mr. W. Gay, which had occurred in the previous month. Mr. Gay's name was familiar to the members through his constant attendance at the Cainscross meetings and the many occasions he took part in the discussions. He was ever an advocate of the claims of labour, and held at all times that the worker was worthy of his hire. At this meeting the Auditors' fees were advanced to £15 each per annum. The question of paying the minimum wage was raised at both the Cainscross and Dursley meetings, and at the latter with some persistency. A notice of motion was promised as an outcome for the following Quarterly Meeting.

During the year the Society was able, as usual, to show considerable progress, if not to the same extent as in the previous one. Trade in some parts of the Society's area had not been quite so good, but with it all there appeared to be no limit to Co-operative expansion. Year by year the sales were going up, and with the profits saved and advantages given the Society was furnishing valuable object-lessons in the solution of social problems. Up to this period much had been achieved by the progress made, and for the future the measure of further success would greatly depend upon the intelligence and steady co-operation of the individual members.

Year.	Sales.		Share Capital.		Dividend.		Members.
	£		£		£		
1905	64,561	...	27,690	...	7,811	...	2,775
1908	73,536	...	31,794	...	8,929	...	3,183

There are those who need our helping,
 Those who listen for our song;
 Only souls that have been tortured
 Know the bitterness of wrong.





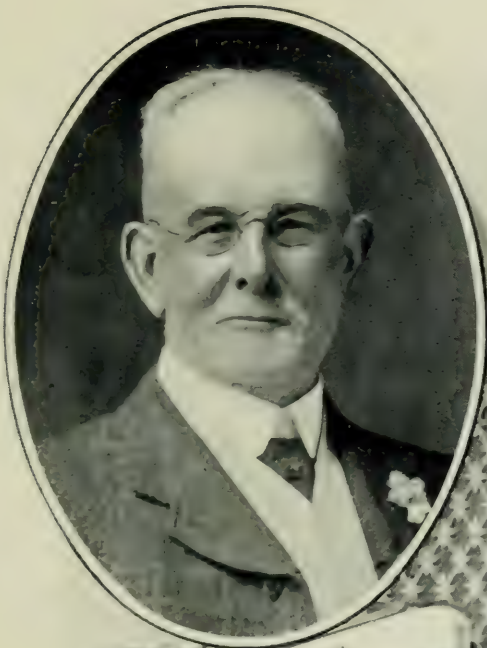
CHAPTER XVII.

Consolidation of Position—1909-12.

IMPORTANT MEETINGS—MR. JAMES HARPER—SHOP HOURS—
DEATH OF MR. B. PITT—DEATH OF MR. G. BRAIN—NEW
DURSLEY STORE — SOME QUESTIONS — AN AMBITION —
RESIGNATION OF MR. O. J. PEARCE—OF SERVICE—NEW
EXTENSIONS.

WITH the dawn of 1909 a gleam of hope was brought into thousands of Co-operative homes by the operation of the Old-age Pensions Act. Co-operators had been discussing pensions for years, the dividends of the Store had enabled some provision to be made for sickness and old age, but now, with the contribution from the State, aged Co-operators at least would be able to pass the eventide of life in comparative ease.

The Annual Meetings of 1909 created more than usual interest, and at the six meetings called no difficulty was experienced in securing the necessary quorum. At these meetings the Committee's action in acquiring a new site at Dursley for £750 was approved, and, further, the Committee were empowered to proceed with the erection of shops, bakery, and stables thereon. This site comprised rather over 1,600 square yards, with a frontage of 80 feet on the main street and 160 feet on the side street. The estimated expenditure of the whole scheme was £3,400. Considerable interest was taken in a proposal "that, as approved by the Newport Congress of 1908, the Committee be recommended to adopt forthwith the principle of a minimum wage of 24s. per week for all male employees over twenty-one years of age." Mr. Robinson (of Dursley) brought this forward in a brief, reasonable speech, urging that the resolution be put into



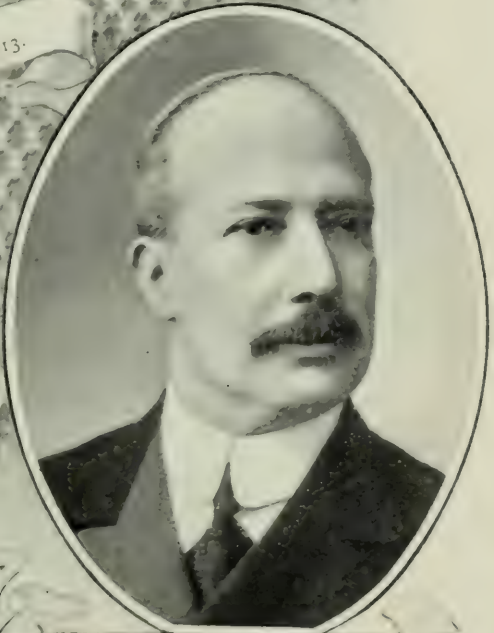
G. F. PAYNE,
Auditor, 1890-1913.



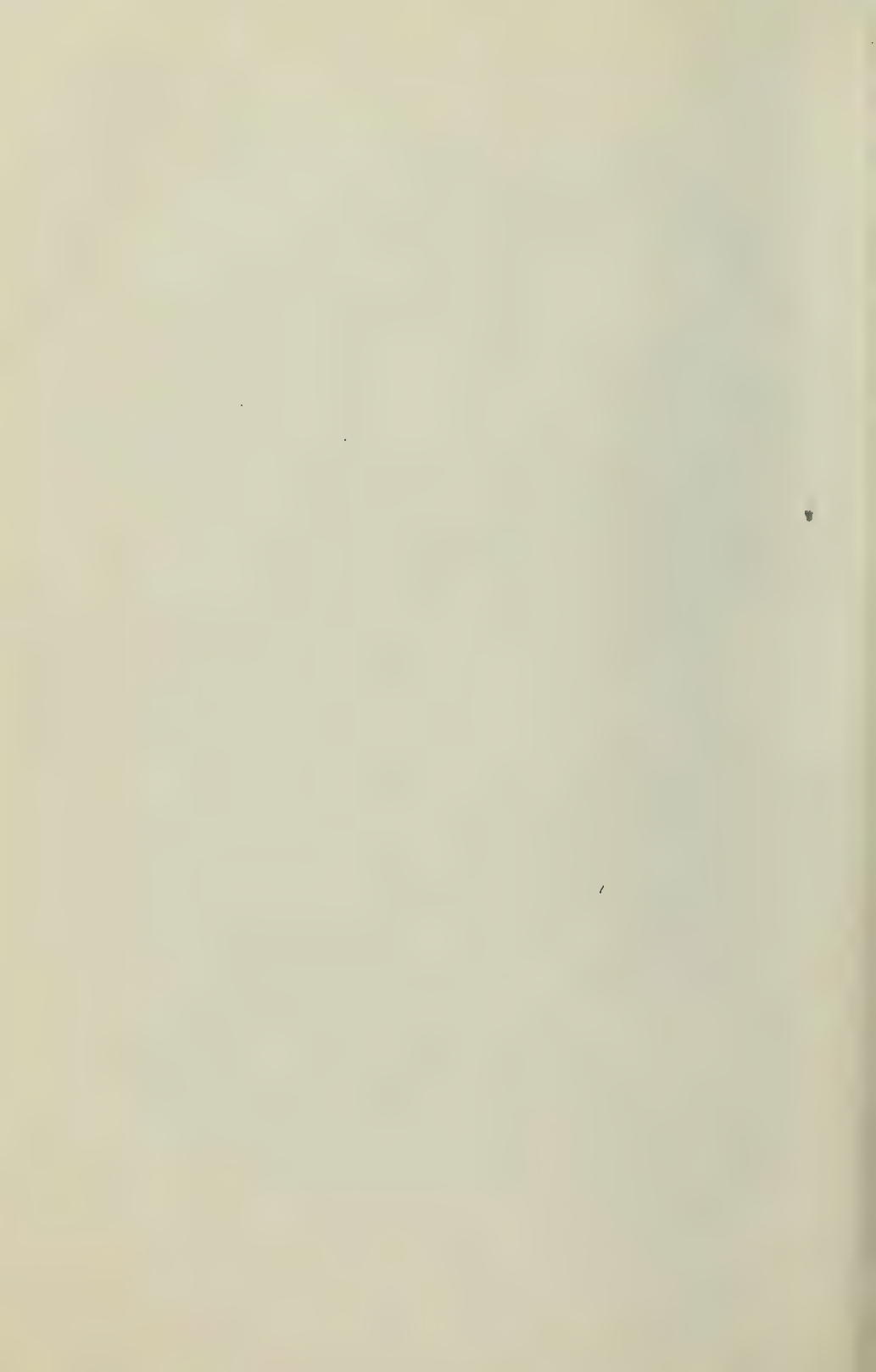
SYDNEY DUDBRIDGE,
Auditor, 1902-1913.



F. W. BECK,
Secretary, 1912-1913.



GEORGE DAUNCEY,
Treasurer, 1910-1913.





BRANCH MANAGERS AND HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS.

Top Row: H. Brinkworth, S. Chandler, C. Smart, T. W. Lewis, A. E. Bird, A. E. Park, H. Bennett, E. Payton.
Middle Row: Miss Pearce, W. Kendall, W. H. Bennett, B. Hudson (*General Manager*), Jas. Pearce, G. Bennett, W. Horscroft.
Bottom Row: E. Underwood, Miss Kerslake, Miss Wager, W. Taylor.

practice, and gave reasons why it should be done. The question was discussed at some length at all the meetings. It was stated that the cost would probably amount to over £400 a year. The speakers generally were of opinion that Co-operative employees should be treated considerately, and be better paid than the general rate of the district, whatever the cost may be. On this point the Committee contended that the Society's employees had always been treated fairly and a little in advance of local conditions. They were not prepared to accept the notice of motion, and gave the following as their conclusions:—

We, as your Committee, have given very careful and impartial consideration to the Co-operative Congress resolution *re* minimum wage to all employees in the movement. We are in full sympathy with the spirit and principle of the resolution; but, at the same time, are strongly and unanimously of the opinion that the present is inopportune to adopt and apply the Congress scale of wages to all grades of employees in our Society. We believe, however, that by still following on the lines of progress in relation to wages and management, we shall eventually see most, possibly all, our employees in receipt of wages consistent with the Congress recommendation.

That the members were quite in agreement with this statement was shown by only thirty-five voting for Mr. Robinson's motion to 207 against. The educational work of the winter was confined to three public meetings. One was held at the Cainscross Schools, where Mr. Johns (of Reading) was the speaker, and the others were held at Wotton-under-Edge and Nailsworth.

The death of Mr. James Harper in June, 1909, caused sincere regret to his many friends at Cainscross and district. Mr. Harper was connected with the old Educational Committee, and during the time it was in existence rendered valuable service to local Co-operation as writer, lecturer, and public speaker. In one of his speeches at Cainscross he made the assertion that the future lay between public companies and Co-operation, the first of which was to be discouraged, because they were monopolies, while Co-operation would get all and *divide all*. Another remark in a speech of his was: "The

fear of want is the greatest fear of the human race. Co-operation puts a man beyond that fear, because he is part of a corporate body, able to help the weak in time of want."

Trade unions have been of some assistance in bringing down the hours of labour in the various organised trades, but shop assistants with no real organisation have had to be content to work inordinate hours. Co-operators, with consideration for their employees, have always been in the forefront in the adoption of reasonable working conditions. As a further step in this direction the Committee resolved, in September, 1909, to reduce the shop hours by a further two and a half hours weekly. This alteration made the shop hours $60\frac{1}{2}$ in the week, which, excluding the allowance for meal times, brought down the employees' working hours to 53 a week; and experience has proved that, while the change was a boon to the staff, it has been in no way a detriment to the Society.

The year 1909 showed steady progress. The sales were £4,057 in advance of those of the previous year, to which every Branch of the Society had contributed its quota. Share capital had an increase of £2,118, and, as this was not required in the business, a further sum of £1,250 was invested in other Co-operative institutions, and £500 in additional mortgages. The increased sales brought increased profit. In the December quarter, after paying the usual 2s. 6d. dividend, there was a good balance left over, which was utilised to pay for some of the items in connection with the new premises at Dursley.

The Society lost one more of its old officials in the death of Mr. Benjamin Pitt, who passed away in April, 1910, at the ripe age of 82. Mr. Pitt came to the Society in 1885 as Treasurer, when the late Mr. Henry Webb relinquished that post through the troublesome division which occurred at that time. It can be truthfully said that Mr. Pitt's assistance and advice was of very great help, particularly in those earlier years. No time nor trouble was of any account to him if he saw that his help was needed. When he became Treasurer the quarterly sales were only £1,570, the membership 301, and the

only place of business was that of Cainscross. The Committee were then six in number; four of these had passed away, and the other two had ceased their official connection. Mr. Pitt also acted as Secretary *pro tem.* at two different periods. Mr. G. Dauncey was elected Treasurer at the following Quarterly Meeting.

Another old pioneer in the person of Mr. George Brain passed away in March of this year. To most of the present members Mr. Brain would probably be unknown, but to the older Cainscross members his name would be familiar, and would bring back recollections of the early period of the Society's history. Mr. Brain was one of the original members—one of the band who joined in 1863—and remained a member to his death. He was elected on the Committee in 1869, and became Chairman of that body in 1877. He continued in that office until the Annual Meeting of 1889, when he decided to retire. During his twenty years of office he had seen the Society at a very low ebb, but lived to see it in the days of its prosperity. Much is due to those early workers of the Society. Although there was not much to show for their constant efforts and unremitting labour, they must be given the credit of sowing the seed and fostering the early growth that was to attain a full maturity in the years to come.

The new Dursley Store and Bakery was completed in April, 1910. Dursley members had been long anxious for better facilities in their local Store, and, considering that the town is some eleven miles from the Central Store, there was every justification for their desire. The new buildings occupy a prominent position in the town, converging on two roads. The contract for the buildings, which consist of two shops, *i.e.*, bakery and stables, was £2,475. Ovens, fittings, and utensils cost a further £900. Additional stock accounted for another £900. So that altogether, including the value of site, the capital involved exceeded a sum of £5,000. This was a big outlay for a Branch, but the cost in interest and depreciation had been long foreseen and prepared for. The expense was well within the compass of the Society to bear, and

present results have shown that the expenditure was not an unwise one. Messrs. Orchard and Peer were the builders, and the architect was Mr. Springall, representing the Architects' Department of the Co-operative Wholesale Society.

The official opening took place on May 21st, and the day was one of rejoicing for Co-operators.

Mr. B.S. Hill was Chairman of the opening proceedings, and Mr. T. Miles (the President) performed the ceremony of unlocking the principal door. Mr. Miles, in the course of his remarks at the opening, said he unhesitatingly affirmed that the effect of the Co-operative movement had been greatly beneficial to the people and town of Dursley. The Society had accomplished a good work, and he believed it was destined to do greater things in the future.

There was a luncheon to delegates, officials, and visitors, at which a number of congratulatory speeches were made.

The Rev. Canon Barnett eulogised the aims of Co-operation, and spoke of the value of Co-operative educational work.

Mr. G. F. Payne, as Auditor to the Society for twenty years, testified that during the whole of that time the success of this organisation had been progressive, and he knew that the Society was established on sound principles.

The Victoria Hall and the Wesleyan School were requisitioned for the teas, to which about 600 sat down.

In the evening both hall and schoolroom were required to accommodate the people for the meetings. Messrs. T. Miles and D. May were the respective Chairmen. The chief speakers were Mr. Adam Deans (of London), Mr. Ed. Smith (in recognition of his father, who was a member of the Committee in the early days), and Mr. George Dauncey.

Very great interest and enthusiasm was evinced in the meetings and entertainment, and the speeches were well worthy of the occasion. Mr. Deans, in the course of his remarks, said that such a splendid work as they were celebrating that day proved to him that the people of

Dursley had begun to understand the principles and objects of Co-operation. Also that they were following in the footsteps of those who had been so successful at Cainscross in their determination to do all that was possible to make their Branch a success.

Mr. Smith drew attention to the spirit of enterprise that had caused a building to be erected which would be a credit to any place, and he ventured to hope that it had fulfilled every local member's expectations. During the evening Mr. H. C. Davis (the Branch Manager) was the recipient of a handsome silver-plated tea and coffee service, subscribed for by the local members. Mr. H. T. Tocknell (the No. 1 member of Dursley Branch) made the presentation.

To return to general affairs, there was very little business done at the Quarterly Meetings during the first nine months of 1910, but a number of questions came up for discussion at the November meeting. There were at this meeting three notices of motion from members: (1) The alteration in the number of Branch Quarterly Meetings; (2) the publishing of a profit and loss account for each department; and (3) the doubling of the Committee's fees. The Committee were not in favour of any alteration in the holding of meetings or in the method of dealing with the accounts. On the question of fees, they left that entirely in the hands of the members. The discussion on the latter was interesting from the point of view in which it was approached. Some speakers were in favour, and generally it was accepted that the 1s. per week was no remuneration whatever. One speaker (Mr. Brook) said he had never seen a better set of men on a Committee, and did not think they were there for any mercenary object. He should recommend the Committee not to make any change, as at present they could say the work was done for the love of it. He should vote against the motion solely for the purpose of keeping the work on a higher plane. In the end the voting was adverse to all the motions.

The trading results for 1910 marked a great step forward; so much so that the increase of £6,732 in the

sales was the largest on record. One factor in this increase was, of course, the opening of the new premises and the addition of a new department at Dursley. Doubtless, too, the festivities there had drawn the attention of the people in Mid-Gloucester to the fact that Co-operation was doing something for the betterment of the people. At the end of 1910 the figures were: Sales at parent Store, Cainscross, £29,526; sales at five Branch Stores, £54,800. The wages bill for 1910 was £4,624, and the number of employees eighty-seven.

In November of this year the Society lost one of its friends and workers by the death of Mr. F. Fern. Mr. Fern had been regular in his attendance at the Quarterly Meetings for many years, and in the early part of 1910 was elected to the Committee. Although his term of office was of short duration, it was sufficient to merit the cordial appreciation of his colleagues on the Board. Much solid progress was made during 1911. The staple trade in the neighbourhood was generally good, and this had its influence on the trading results of the Society. There was an increase of £6,194 in the year's sales, which was spread over the whole area of the Society's operations.

Early in February, 1912, the Committee invited all the employees to a dinner and social evening at Cainscross, when there were nearly one hundred present. Mr. Miles, who presided, gave a cordial welcome to the employees, and expressed the Committee's appreciation of the good service that had been rendered by them. In his opinion the progress made by the Society had been nothing short of extraordinary. At this gathering one of the officials, in touching upon the coming Jubilee, expressed a hope that in the twelve months previous to the Jubilee the Society's sales should reach the round figure of £100,000. In 1885, when the Society had been established twenty-two years, the sales were £5,995; in 1890 they had increased to £48,918; and in 1911 they were £90,521. The last year had been successful in point of sales, profits, and financial stability, and what had contributed in a measure to this had been the loyalty of the employees

to the Society's interests. An appeal was made for the co-operation of the ninety-two members of the staff to do all that was possible for this hope to be satisfied.

The Members' Meetings were few in number, for out of six called for February only three could be held, and two of these were at Cainscross and Dursley. There was a spirited contest for the three vacancies on the Committee for Cainscross and the seat at Dursley, but the retiring Committee-men were re-elected, together with Mr. Randall for the vacancy caused by the death of Mr. Fern.

In April of this year Mr. O. J. Pearce, the esteemed Secretary, resigned his position upon his appointment to the Secretaryship of the Stroud Mutual Sick Benefit Society. It will be remembered that Mr. Pearce became connected with the Society in 1885 as an assistant at Cainscross, and afterwards as first Branch Manager at Stonehouse in 1886. He continued there until he sustained his accident in 1887, which necessitated the relinquishment of his duties. He was elected as Secretary in 1889. Mr. Pearce had ever been a faithful servant, and had rendered good service to the Society. He was one whom the Committee and members were sorry to lose. When he became Secretary the membership was 701, and when he severed his official connection it had gone up to 3,500. On the occasion of Mr. Pearce's leaving the Committee made him a presentation as a token of esteem, and the employees showed their appreciation in a similar manner.

The last of the original members in the person of Mr. A. T. Lydeard passed away in April of this year. Mr. Lydeard was a consistent Co-operator and a sincere friend of the Society throughout the whole period of his forty-nine years' membership.

Without doubt the Society was of great service to its members in the early months of 1912. The great coal strike brought home to the people many lessons, and, above all, it showed how dependent the community was on the coal supplies. But throughout the crisis in the industrial world Co-operators were in a more favoured position than those of the workers outside the movement.

There was abundant evidence that the Store in this neighbourhood, and, indeed, the Stores all over the country, were of very great benefit to every member who belonged to them. When the outside merchant was taking advantage of the shortage of supplies to rush up prices, and thus gain enormous profits, the Stores sold at a moderate price based upon actual cost. Such an example furnished a valuable object-lesson in favour of the movement. It also drew attention to the material advantages that must necessarily accrue if factories, workshops, and coal-mines could be worked upon Co-operative lines.

A scheme of shop extensions for Cainscross was brought before the August Quarterly Meetings and was agreed to. The scheme provided for the erection of a new hall and two new shops for outfitting and boots on a piece of vacant land adjoining the east portion of the Central premises. The room vacated by the Boot and Outfitting Departments admitted of extensions to the existing Grocery and Drapery Departments respectively. At the same meeting the action of the Committee in acquiring Oxford Villa, Cainscross, for the sum of £550 was approved. The latter purchase was made with a view to the erection—probably in a few years—of a new bakery for the Central district.

The Insurance Act came into operation in July. As another proof of the Committee's interest in and regard for the employees they decided to go a step further than the Act stipulated, and resolved to pay the employees' contributions in addition to what the Society had to meet as employers. At a subsequent meeting the members approved of the Committee's action.



CHAPTER XVIII.

Reserve Fund and Depreciation.

OPINIONS differ as to the purpose of a reserve fund, and judging from the questions asked at Quarterly Meetings there are those who look upon such a fund in a none too friendly spirit. It may be well, therefore, to briefly review the matter.

The advantages of a reserve fund are:—(1) That it gives confidence to members to invest, or allow their dividends and interest to accumulate in the Society. (2) That it impresses the public generally with the strength of the movement, and gives confidence of its ability to meet all its engagements. (3) It provides material for protection against combined hostile action. It is essential to the maintenance of the success and prosperity of the Society that a portion of the profits should be set apart for the purpose of such a reserve. Also that the fund thus created should only be used for exceptional losses or special depreciations that may occur. A fire, for instance, even with insurance, would cause a serious loss through dislocation of business, and other causes. The Co-operative Union has laid down the principle that a reserve fund should equal ten per cent of the share capital.

The Committee have always been alive to the necessity of a good reserve fund, although it was not possible to make much headway in this respect in the earlier years. The first sum set aside to form a reserve was in the September quarter of 1865.

RESERVE FUND AT DECEMBER—	£	s.	d.
1872.....	81	5	8
1882.....	129	13	10
1892.....	213	13	6
1902.....	1269	14	2
1912.....	2607	12	0

DEPRECIATION.

The matter of depreciation is an old question, and one on which there is a diversity of opinion among Co-operative members. Financial experts, bankers, joint-stock companies, and all those conversant with money matters are, however, with scarcely an exception, strongly in favour of liberal depreciation. In a Co-operative Society there is special need for good depreciation. The buildings which have been erected by the Society are only suitable for the special requirements of a Co-operative business, and in consequence should be written down to the sum they would fetch in a forced sale. Moreover, the system is valuable in that it is of material assistance in the development of business by releasing capital which would otherwise be locked up. When liberal depreciation is the rule every member has the satisfaction of knowing that his investment in the Society is thoroughly sound. The fittings and fixtures, however much as they have cost, are worth next to nothing as a saleable value, and the proper policy is to gradually write these out of existence. This is the policy the Board has endeavoured to carry out, and to it may be attributed the strong financial position of the Society to-day.

LAND AND	Original Cost.		Depreciation Allowed.		Present Value in Balance Sheet.
BUILDINGS—	£		£		£
Cainscross.....	6,254	...	2,560	...	3,694
Branches.....	6,323	...	1,952	...	4,371
FIXED & ROLL- ING STOCK—					
Cainscross.....	3,737	...	3,737	...	<i>nil.</i>
Stonehouse	1,098	...	1,098	...	<i>nil.</i>
Dursley	1,224	...	422	...	802
Nailsworth	616	...	616	...	<i>nil.</i>
Wotton	301	...	301	...	<i>nil.</i>
King Stanley...	204	...	204	...	<i>nil.</i>
Horses, Traps, and Wagons.	1,617	...	1,242	...	375
	<u>8,797</u>	...	<u>7,620</u>	...	<u>1,177</u>



CHAPTER XIX.

Area of Operations.

THE Cainscross and Ebley Society is essentially what may be termed a country Store, with Branches in certain rural townships. The Central premises are situated at Cainscross, and the district which they serve comprises the parishes of Cainscross (population 2,190), Randwick (689), Woodchester (831), and parts of Rodborough, King Stanley, Whiteshill, and Stroud. There is an estimated population in this area of 7,200.

The Stonehouse Branch area takes in the parishes of Stonehouse (2,304), Eastington (1,213), Frocester (239), Whitminster (308), and part of Haresfield and Standish, with a total population of 4,984.

The Dursley area comprises the parishes of Dursley (2,604), Cam (1,834), Uley (973), Coaley (673), Stinchcombe (332), Slimbridge (808), Ham (390), Owlpen (77), and part of Berkeley; total population of 7,790.

The Nailsworth area comprises the parishes of Nailsworth (3,031), Horsley (1,040), Avening (918), and part of Minchinhampton; total population of 6,040.

The Wotton-under-Edge Branch comprises the parishes of Wotton-under-Edge (3,021), Kingswood (876), North Nibley (745), Charfield (697), Cromhall (565), Alderley (92), and part of Wickwar (600); total population, 6,506.

The King Stanley Branch has for its operations the major part of King Stanley parish, and rather more than half of Leonard Stanley; population of 1,650.

Thus the area covered is a very extensive one. Wotton Branch is the farthest away, being a distance of fifteen miles from Cainscross, while Dursley is eleven miles away. The two extreme points are Whiteshill at the Cainscross end, and Cromhall at the Wotton end, a distance of about twenty-one miles. It may be said that the bread area in its daily round from one or another of the Branches practically links up in a continuous line the whole of this intervening distance.

Area.	Approximate Population.		Approximate No. of Household-ers.		Members
Cainscross	7,200	...	1,872	...	1074
Stonehouse.....	4,984	...	1,300	...	585
Dursley	7,790	...	2,028	...	841
Nailsworth.....	6,040	...	1,573	...	564
Wotton-under-Edge.	6,506	...	1,690	...	406
King Stanley.....	1,650	...	429	...	274
	<hr/>		<hr/>		<hr/>
	34,170	...	8,892	...	3744



CHAPTER XX.

Conclusion.

CONSUMMATION—THE PAST—PRESENT-DAY POSITION—FIGURES
OF PROGRESS—JUBILEE FUND—PROGRAMME OF EVENTS—
THE NEW EXTENSIONS.

CONSUMMATION.

AT the beginning of 1912 a hope was expressed that the year prior to the Jubilee would be a record one, and that the sales would reach the sum of £100,000. For this an increase of £10,000 was required. At the time such a desire hardly seemed possible of fulfilment, but the hope was a collective one, and by collective effort on the part of one and all the hope expressed became a realised fact.

The year 1912 was a fitting prelude to the year of Jubilee, and will long stand out as a period of remarkable expansion, and consistent loyalty on the part of the members and staff. The following are the figures for 1912 (53 weeks):—Sales, £103,418. 10s. 4d.; increase, £12,896. 12s. 2d.

THE PAST.

The past is a memory and the future a hope. We cannot live in the days that are gone, but the experience of them is of great use to us. We learn by experience, and the world is continually amending or improving its manner of life. We can learn much from history to guide our actions in the present towards a happier and nobler future. A nation or a people will evolve towards the highest, just in proportion as they know and understand their past, and in the light of that knowledge and understanding consciously work for the attainment of a higher ideal. Some have seen their best days, and what glory

they have is due to their past. Greece, but one of the minor states to-day, is interesting because of her glorious traditions. She taught us methods of government; in fact, the very words now used to indicate varying methods of governments were borrowed from Greece. From her we get the idea of democracy. She taught us philosophy, poetry, and art, but we can learn from her decline that the lack of unity is fatal to growth of peoples. For 2,000 years the world has been groping for an ideal, and although the moral development in that period may have been slow, yet there has been development. In spite of a certain pessimism, in his latest work the veteran scientist and social philosopher, Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace, points out that "during the past century a period of material prosperity has been also a period of a great uprising of the specifically human virtues of justice, of pity, of love, of freedom, and the recognition of the importance of education." The Co-operative movement has been a manifestation of this uprising, and in it our Society has taken part.

The Society in its work of to-day, in its teaching and efforts to educate the people towards a social ideal, is sowing the seed which the future will reap. Of that future, with its possibilities and prospects, the members of this Society must see to it that full advantage is taken of every opportunity for development. No institution will succeed that lives only for the present, and it is the duty of every member to do what is possible, so that a greater number shall partake of the benefits which the Society is able to give.

PRESENT-DAY POSITION.

Fifty years is no great span in the life of a nation, but it is the whole measure of existence for this Society. From June, 1863, to May, 1913, the dividend and interest allowed to members has been £178,620. Of this sum £141,511 has been withdrawn; the balance has been left in the Society and forms part of the share capital. The total assets on April 5th, 1913, were £53,216. The details of the chief items are as follows:—

	£
Trade Premises.....	8,065
Fixed and Rolling Stock.....	1,177
Stock in Trade	8,522
Book Debts Owing by Members	1,572
House and Cottage Property.....	1,258
Shares and Loans in Co-operative Institutions	20,101
Other Investments	496
Mortgages to Members	8,211
Cash	3,814
	<hr/>
	53,216

That the Society has prospered and developed far beyond the visions of its founders must be evident to everyone who considers the extent of its trade and financial position. There are now ninety-five employees in the service of the Society, to whom the sum of £5,358 was paid in wages during 1912. For trade purposes seventeen horses and twenty-three vehicles of various descriptions are employed.

FIGURES OF PROGRESS.

A summary of the Society's progress in periods of five years:—

Year.	Sales.	Dividends Paid.	Members' Capital.	Reserve Fund.	Members.	Average Dividend.
	£	£	£	£		s. d.
1863.....	1475	102	245	—	152	1 0½
1867.....	3294	229	580	49	145	1 9
1872.....	3964	225	1078	81	129	1 6
1877.....	4599	365	1950	123	153	1 10½
1882.....	4741	556	2730	131	211	2 9½
1887.....	9945	1170	4719	150	537	2 6
1892.....	21580	2376	8278	213	909	2 3¼
1897.....	39601	4861	16069	670	1701	2 6
1902.....	54516	6570	23287	1259	2460	2 6
1907.....	71065	8566	30626	1790	2947	2 6
1912.....	103418	12584	41865	2607	3707	2 6

JUBILEE FUND.

After the many years of progress it cannot be surprising that there should be a desire to fittingly celebrate the Society's Jubilee. To do this funds were needed, and the Committee, therefore, resolved to recommend the Quarterly Meeting of February, 1911, to raise a special fund for the purpose.

The idea at the time was to raise an amount of between £400 and £500 out of the surplus profits remaining after the usual dividend had been declared. The fund thus commenced has been augmented quarter by quarter until, with the amount passed at the last Quarterly Meeting, the Jubilee Fund had amounted to £538.

With an event of this character, and the amount of money to be spent, the one desire of the Committee has been to act in accordance with the wishes of the members, and in order to get a representative opinion they made a recommendation to the November meeting of 1912 as follows:—"That a Jubilee Committee be formed, to consist of the present Board with representatives from the membership of each Branch." This was adopted, but Stonehouse and Nailsworth had no direct representatives, for the reason that no Quarterly Meetings were held there in November.

Suggestions were asked for, both through the pages of the *Economist* and at the Quarterly Meetings, as to the form the Jubilee proceedings should take,

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS.

The first meeting of the Special Committee was held on January 4th, when a long list of suggestions was put before them. After several meetings the following programme was unanimously decided upon:—

1. That a short history of the Society be prepared, and a copy given to each member.
2. That there be a Co-operative Productive Exhibition, under the auspices of the Co-operative Wholesale Society.
3. That the Cainscross premises be decorated.
4. That there be a procession of the Society's vehicles at Cainscross.



JUBILEE CELEBRATION COMMITTEE.

Top Row: E. Warner, A. Barrett, O. J. Pearce, F. Randall, W. Teakle, C. Critchley, C. Jellings, J. Jennings.
Middle Row: A. J. Hoskins, G. Dauncey, B. Hudson, T. Miles, F. W. Beck, D. May, J. Bennett.
Bottom Row: B. S. Hill, G. Humphries, Ed. Smith, S. Roach.



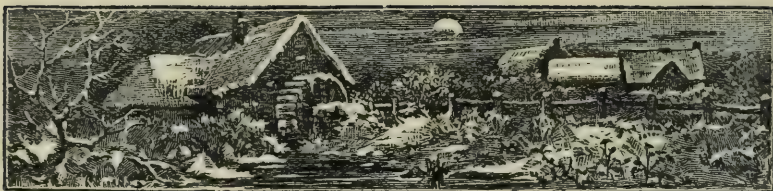
THE SOCIETY'S AREA OF OPERATIONS IS WITHIN THE SHADED PORTION.

5. That provision for teas be made on the grounds at Cainscross for members and their wives or husbands (as the case may be) visiting the Exhibition. Each member to be entitled to two tickets free.
6. That children's teas be held at Cainscross, Stonehouse, Dursley, Nailsworth, and Wotton-under-Edge.
7. That a dinner and souvenir be given to each employee. Those with fifteen or more years' service to have a medal.
8. That an open-air concert be held at Cainscross.

THE NEW EXTENSIONS.

The new building extensions at Cainscross have been timed so as to form a part of the Society's Jubilee commemoration. The extensions form a pleasing feature to the Cainscross premises, and consist of new shops and storerooms for the Boot and Outfitting Departments. The storey above these is a fine hall that will be suitable for meetings and other functions. The new part is of brick set off with stone, and has been substantially built by Messrs. Orchard and Peer, whose contract price was £1,662. In the scheme of alterations the Grocery Department has been provided with a good addition to its shop room, and minor alterations have been made to the Furnishing and Drapery Departments. The whole of the new premises are well lighted, and are heated by a low pressure hot-water system.

The building was carried out to plans and under the supervision of the Architects' Department of the Co-operative Wholesale Society, represented by Mr. Springall, and it is anticipated that the cost of the complete scheme will be about £2,200.



General Committee and Officials.

PRESENT OFFICERS.

President :

Mr. TIMOTHY MILES..... February, 1900-1913.
Committee : 1893-1900.

Committee :

Mr. A. J. HOSKINS February, 1894-1896; 1898-1903;
 1904-1913.
 „ B. S. HILL February, 1898-1913.
 „ D. MAY February, 1899-1913.
 „ F. RANDALL 1892-1896, 1898-1904, 1912-1913.
 „ J. BENNETT..... February, 1903-1913.
 „ E. SMITH February, 1903-1913.
 „ A. BARRETT February, 1903-1913.
 „ E. WARNER February, 1907-1913.

General Manager :

Mr. B. HUDSON December, 1889.

Secretary :

Mr. F. W. BECK May, 1912.

Treasurer :

Mr. GEORGE DAUNCEY..... August, 1910.

Auditors :

Mr. G. F. PAYNE February, 1890.
 „ SYDNEY DUDBRIDGE..... February, 1902.

PAST OFFICERS.

Chairmen of Committee :

Mr. C. F. JEFFERIES	1868-1877.
„ GEORGE BRAIN	1877-1889.
„ GEORGE BROOKS	1889-1893.

Presidents :

Mr. JOSEPH WEARE.....	1893-1898.
„ RICHARD M. WARNER ...	1898-1899.
„ WILLIAM COLLINS	1899-1900.

Treasurers :

Mr. HENRY WEBB	June, 1863, to February, 1885.
„ BENJAMIN PITT	February, 1885, to May, 1910.

Secretaries :

Mr. JAMES ROOME.....	January, 1863, to February, 1864.
„ WILLIAM BROWNE	February, 1864, to September, 1867.
„ E. B. HOOPER	February, 1868, to November, 1877.
„ JOHN JACOB	November, 1877, to February, 1881.
„ D. J. CLOSE	February, 1881, to November, 1886.
„ FREDERICK G. PITT	February, 1887, to August, 1889.
„ ORLANDO J. PEARCE.....	November, 1889, to April, 1912.

Managers :

Mr. MAURICE GORTON	June, 1863, to January, 1864.
„ JAMES ROOME.....	February, 1864, to July, 1864.
„ E. SHIPWAY	July, 1864, to May, 1884.
„ THOMAS LYLES	May, 1884, to November, 1889.

Committee :

Mr. HENRY HOOPER.....	June, 1863-1864.
„ JACOB STAGG	June, 1863-1866.
„ ALFRED WHILEY	June, 1863-1864.
„ STEPHEN CLOSE	June, 1863-1865.
„ WILLIAM GORTON	June, 1863-1864.

PAST OFFICERS—*continued*.*Committee :*

Mr. GEORGE ROOME.....	June, 1863-1864.
„ C. F. JEFFERIES	February, 1864-1868.
„ HENRY J. WEIGHT	February, 1864-1870.
„ GEORGE JEFFERIES	February, 1864-1865.
„ JOSEPH B. WEARE	February, 1865-1885.
„ WILLIAM PITT.....	November, 1865-1885.
„ W. CHAPMAN	February, 1866-1867.
„ A. VICK.....	February, 1866-1868.
„ W. SHIPTON	February, 1867-1869.
„ J. PRICE	February, 1868-1877.
„ G. A. HURCOMB	February, 1868-1869.
„ SAMUEL SMART	February, 1869-1878; 1885-1887.
„ GEORGE BRAIN	February, 1869-1877.
„ ADOLPHUS SMITH	February, 1870-1877.
„ J. LUSTY	February, 1877-1881.
„ GEORGE PEARCE.....	February, 1877-1881.
„ R. BEARD	February, 1878-1888.
„ JACOB BURFORD	February, 1878-1880.
„ GEORGE BROOKS	February, 1880-1888; 1895-1898.
„ H. WINFIELD	February, 1881-1884.
„ S. S. HULANDS	February, 1884-1886.
„ JOHN KENDALL	February, 1886-1891.
„ N. LUSTY.....	February, 1886-1888.
„ THOMAS FORD.....	February, 1888-1894.
„ R. M. WARNER	February, 1888-1898.
„ WILLIAM COLE	February, 1889-1892; 1893-1902.
„ A. BEEVER	February, 1891-1892.
„ SAMUEL HOLDER	February, 1892-1893.
„ WILLIAM COLLINS	February, 1893-1894; 1896-1899.
„ TIMOTHY MILES.....	1893-1900.
„ THOMAS CORDWELL.....	1896-1898.
„ T. H. GRIFFIN	1897-1898.
„ S. ALLSOP	1897-1900.
„ ALFRED UNDERWOOD	1900-1903.
„ GEORGE DAUNCEY.....	1900-1901; 1903-1910.
„ W. ORTON	1901-1903.
„ GEORGE HURST.....	1902-1904.
„ WILLIAM KEMPTON.	1902-1903.

PAST OFFICERS—*continued.**Auditors :*

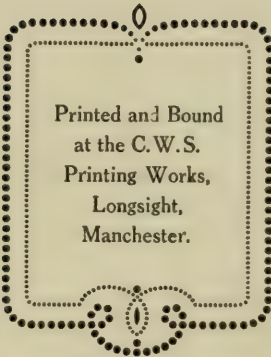
Mr. JOSEPH SMITH.....	June, 1863-1882.
„ EDWIN HALE	June, 1863-1864.
„ H. HOOPER	February, 1864-1867.
„ E. B. HOOPER.....	February, 1867-1868.
„ H. SMITH	February, 1868-1869.
„ E. W. RUEGG.....	February, 1869-1870.
„ THOMAS SMITH.....	February, 1870-1877.
„ JOHN JACOB	February, 1877, to November, 1877.
„ E. B. HOOPER.....	November, 1877, to May, 1882.
„ W. H. CLOSE.....	May, 1882, to February, 1890.
„ WILLIAM RANDALL	May, 1882, to August, 1884.
„ H. A. POWELL	August, 1884, to February, 1890.
„ S. J. DUDBRIDGE	February, 1890, to February, 1902.



Departments.

Branch Managers and Heads of Departments :

		Year of Appointment
Stonehouse.....	Mr. W. BENNETT	1900
Dursley	„ W. KENDALL.....	1911
Nailsworth	„ A. E. PARK	1901
Wotton-under-Edge.....	„ T. W. LEWIS.....	1906
King Stanley.....	„ S. CHANDLER	1905
Cainscross Bakery	„ JAMES PEARCE	1885
„ Grocery	„ H. BENNETT	1911
„ Butchering	„ A. BIRD.....	1900
„ Drapery	Miss A. PEARCE	1898
„ Boots	Mr. A. WARDLE	1913
„ Furnishing	„ E. PAYTON	1897
„ Outfitting	„ W. HORSCROFT.....	1905
Stonehouse Drapery	Miss WAGER.....	1910
Dursley Drapery	„ KERSLAKE	1910
Stonehouse Bakery	Mr. H. BRINKWORTH...	1896
Dursley Bakery.....	„ C. SMART	1897
Nailsworth Bakery	„ E. UNDERWOOD ...	1905
Wotton-under-Edge Bakery.....	„ W. TAYLOR	1899



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